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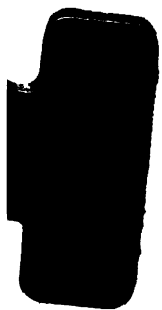
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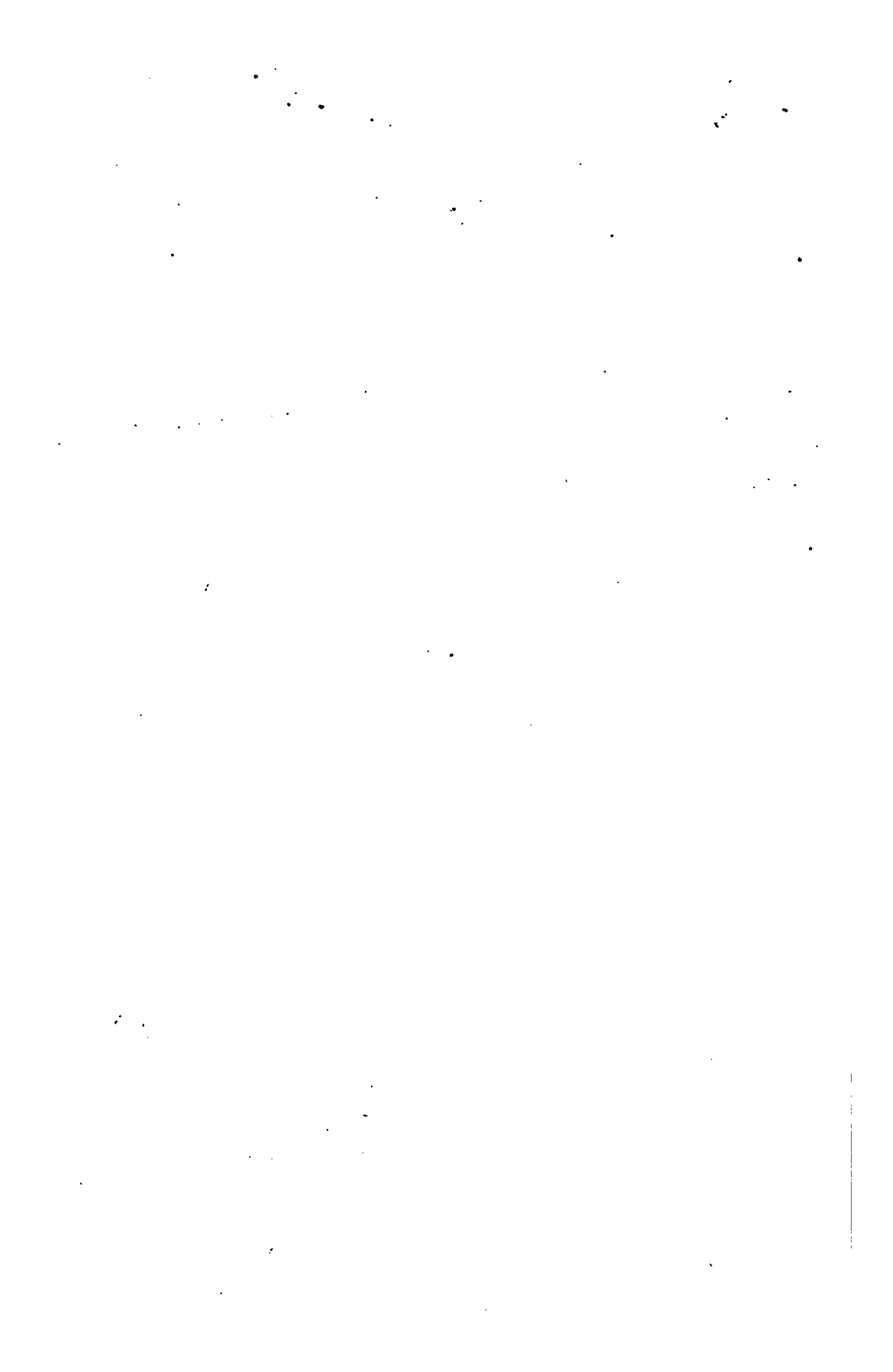
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THE SIN OF CONFORMITY:

AN APPEAL

TO THE

EPISCOPALIANS OF THE TOWN AND
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

BY

WILLIAM ROBINSON.



THIRD EDITION, REVISED & ENLARGED,
AND CONTAINING AN APPEAL TO WESLEYANS.

"Quæso ut patienter audias, non enim de adversario victoriam, sed contra mendacium
querimus veritatem."—JEROME.

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PREFACE.

IN the spring and autumn of the year 1859, four or five vestries were summoned in the parish in which I reside for the purpose of laying a Church-rate. The numerous entreaties made to the supporters of that measure to refrain from it, were met by a resolute, and not always by a courteous refusal. This parochial movement has stimulated me to fulfil a purpose, previously formed, of appealing to my neighbours and all who would give me audience, on the question of National Ecclesiastical Establishments. I do this, recognizing most fully and joyfully the faith, love, zeal, and usefulness of many who hold that conformity is their duty: but on the one point of which this pamphlet treats, I believe that they are in error; that they are pursuing a course detrimental to themselves, their children, their country, and mankind; and that it is my duty to warn them of the error of their ways. "If thou warn the "righteous man, that the righteous sin not, * * * thou "hast delivered thy soul."

Some Dissenters observing the controversies now raging in the Establishment, would fain leave the disputants to struggle into freedom through strife and in ignorance, as the Scotch secessionists did. I think their policy is neither kind, nor enlightened. The voice of Providence, the love of our neighbour, the signs of the times, seem to me to call aloud on Nonconformists to explain to Episcopalians, that the deliverance they are feeling after is to be gained,

not by fighting against the errors *in* the Establishment, but by renouncing the Establishment itself as the cardinal error. It will be well indeed for those who are in bondage, if they lapse into liberty through long and painful strife, in the vain effort to make a bad principle work well; but far better if they soar into liberty, through the perception and love of truth. Blessed are they who become free by accident; but far more blessed are they who become free by choice.

For the sake of brevity, the term *Episcopalians* is sometimes used in this pamphlet to mean Protestant Episcopalians: and the word *Popery*, to mean the doctrines of Romanism. The connexion in which these words are so employed will, it is believed, prevent any misapprehension of their import.

CAMBRIDGE, *January*, 1860.

With the exception of a few verbal corrections, this Second Edition differs from the first only by its supplementary pages.

CAMBRIDGE, *August*, 1860.

The first Edition extended to 64 pages; the second to 76 pages. This Edition is printed in rather smaller type than the former, and contains 81 pages. The additions now made will be found at pages 3, 6, 7 to 9, 22 and 23, 25 and 26, 59 and 60, and 77 to 82.

CAMBRIDGE, *February*, 1863.

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AN APPEAL,

ETC., ETC.

I.

CONFORMITY SIN, BECAUSE IT SANCTIONS AND PROMOTES POPERY.*

"WE have within the pale of the Church of England persons differing not only in their particular tenets, but one party seeking religion in the Bible, with the help of the Spirit, and the other in the Church by means of tradition. * * * * To discuss the discordant creeds included within the Church of England would be to destroy the church."

So said *The Times* in a leading article on the 5th of August, 1852: and this witness is true. An Episcopalian has to make his choice between two alternatives: he may cling to the Protestantism of the Establishment, and

* Should any Catholics read these pages, they will suffer me to say that I cannot but admit the injustice which, as citizens, they have long endured. In common with Protestant Dissenters they are unrighteously subject to civil disabilities in Great Britain: and, as to "the Irish Church," Mr. Macaulay's words are not perhaps too strong in which he denounces it, as "the most absurd and indefensible of all the institutions now existing in the civilized world." But the ecclesiastical system of Catholics I mourn over as a sin against God, and the source of incalculable mischief to mankind. If writing to them, I must prove, what in writing to Protestants I am at liberty to assume, namely, that Popery is sin.

reject the Popery; or he may cling to the Popery, and reject the Protestantism. To receive the whole is impossible. I think it may be added with truth, that in that heterogeneous volume, the Book of Common Prayer, the Popery outweighs the Protestantism; witness the baptismal forms, the catechism, the services for confirmation and the visitation of the sick, the forms for ordination and burial, and the 20th, 26th, and 36th Articles: so that of the two parties, the Evangelical and the Tractarian, I find it impossible not to admit, that the latter is the less inconsistent. Let either follow out its fundamental opinions to their legitimate consequences, and it must quit the Establishment; the latter going to Rome, and the former going out at the opposite door. A consistent churchman is an impossibility.

To explain fully the Romanizing tendencies of the Establishment, would require far more space than my plan allows. I shall therefore content myself by specifying three points, on which the writers of *Tracts for the Times*, and some of the clergy who have become Catholics, lay great stress; namely, the insufficiency of Scripture, Apostolical succession, and the oneness of the church.*

i.

It may be urged, that we Protestants believe the *Scriptures* to contain the whole rule of duty,—certainly not.—TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

Catholics boldly aver that the Bible is not to them a sufficient rule of faith or practice, but that they need also, tradition and the authority of the church. "Yes,"

* See *Tracts for the Times*, p. i. p. 2, and many other places: F. A. Paley's *Brief Review*: Froude's *Remains*: *Three letters to the Editor of the Guardian*, by W. G. Ward.

rejoins many an eager and devout Episcopalian, "that "is the awful sin of Papists; they deny the sufficiency "of Holy Scripture." Be not hasty to judge, for ye do the same thing. You teach, if you do not believe, the insufficiency of the Bible. On that Popish principle, your entire ecclesiastical system rests, as its chief corner-stone. Remove that stone—as it must be removed, for it is neither elect nor precious—and the whole structure becomes a ruin, in which not one stone is left on another; for, in your law is it not written thus:—

"There shall be for every male child to be baptized "two godfathers and one godmother, and for every female "one godfather and two godmothers"?

There is no Scriptural authority for these sponsors. They are quite as much things of human invention, as indulgences and extreme unction: *yet on them rests your entire ecclesiastical institution*. Give up the sponsors, and you *must* abandon your baptismal forms, your catechism, confirmation, and your rule of membership. There would still indeed remain forms for public worship, but there would not remain any body of persons to use them. Your church, as you call it, would be dissolved; your much vaunted fabric, laid in the dust. By your sponsorial institution, which is the corner-stone of your ecclesiastical structure, Chillingworth's famous sentence, *The Bible, the Bible only is the religion of Protestants*, is practically and broadly falsified; and the great question for the right solution of which Christendom travails in pain until now, namely, whether the Bible be the sole authority in matters of religious faith and practice, is answered in the negative. You ought not to be surprised if clergymen who are in earnest, having been schooled among you into the belief of the insufficiency of Scripture, should seek with intense

desire for some other authority on which they may lean. The pretence of the Anglican establishment to possess such authority, wholly fails. In the claim of Rome there is at least a shew of plausibility: and thither, these victims of the Prayer Book have gone, and are going.

ii.

The real ground on which our authority is based—our apostolical descent.—TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

When Paul had propounded to Timothy Christian truth, he said, "the same commit thou to faithful men, "who shall be able to teach others also." That is the legitimate apostolical succession. Richard Baxter, and John Bunyan, and Legh Richmond, and Robert Hall, and Charles Simeon possessed this honourable heraldry. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

This true succession is far less prized among Episcopalian ministers, than another genealogy; which comprises all who, whatever their character, have been ordained by those unscriptural functionaries, diocesan bishops:* and your clergy, and Catholic priests, plume themselves on possessing, through that instrumentality, grace and authority. I wonder your clergy should be proud of their scutcheon, and certainly do not envy them their honours; for, as their own authentic documents shew, the illustrious line of predecessors whose grace they inherit, has consisted for the most part of men ungodly, and grossly wicked; of which fact if you want evidence, be pleased to turn to the second part of the homily for Whitsunday. Call such men the successors of the Apostles!

* More than one bishop to one church, scripture sanctions: but a bishop of a diocese is as unscriptural as a universal bishop.

As well might you affirm a common sewer, to be the offspring of the living fountains, the waters of which it defiles.

Futile, however, as is this figment of apostolical descent, and perfectly suicidal as it is in the case of your clergy—unless indeed they are prepared to assert that the homily for Whitsunday is one of the grossest perversions of history anywhere to be found—it is amusing to observe how almost all of them are inclined to make some capital out of it. A few there are, who thoroughly despise it: but the great majority, even of your Evangelical ministers, seem to think it of some use, at least as a make-weight. The “high and dry” rector, as he moves about “my parish” is well pleased to be assured he is of the genuine succession. And as to the Tractarians, they proclaim the succession to be the real ground on which their authority is built. It can create, therefore, no surprise, that your clergy in general, but especially the Puseyite part of them, should shew great anxiety to ascertain, that this ground is firm beneath their feet. Catholics tell them that when their predecessors, in obedience to the husband of Anne Boleyn, severed themselves from Rome, they became schismatics; and so cut themselves and their successors off from the only channel in which the Apostolical virtue and authority flow. Catholic priests, and your priests, are both agreed that the true succession is to be found among Romanists; but the Catholic wholly denies that you, being in a state of Schism, can possess it. Accordingly, if a Catholic priest become a Protestant, he is not re-ordained, as John Angel James must have been if he had become a minister among you: but when a Protestant minister goes to Rome, he must be re-ordained. Can you wonder that clergymen who have learned from

your ordination service,* *that their right to be ministers depends on their being in the true line of descent*, should go where there is to them certainty, instead of remaining where all is dubious and disputable: should forsake the daughter of very doubtful legitimacy, and betake themselves to the mother of whose episcopal virtue they have no doubt? Such is another of the pathways from you to Rome.

iii.

Have you ever clearly defined to yourself what you mean by 'one society' as applied to the whole Christian Church on earth? It seems to me that most of what I consider the errors about the Church, turn upon an imperfect understanding of this point.—
DR. ARNOLD.

Una ecclesia in cœlis.—TERTULLIAN.

Catholics and you profess to believe in "one holy Church throughout all the world." *They* lay the very greatest stress upon this tenet; and *you* attach to it scarcely less importance. Has it never occurred to you that there neither has been, nor can be, one Church throughout all the world? Has it never flashed into your mind that the sentiment you sing every week in the Te Deum, and affirm as an article of belief in every service, is absurd; and clashes with the authoritative definition given in the 19th Article? A Church is a congregation.†

* "Now every one of us believes this. [Apostolical succession] "I know that some will at first deny they do. Still they do believe "it; only it is not sufficiently, practically impressed on their minds. "They do believe it, for it is the doctrine of the ordination service, "which they have recognised as truth in the most solemn moments "of their lives."—*Tracts for the Times*, No. 1, p. 2.

† *Ecclesia Christi visibilis est cœtus fidelium*, should be translated, "a (not the) visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men."—See Whateley's *Kingdom of Christ*, p. 114.

Whenever that radical sense of the word is wanting, the word is used improperly. There is one, but one Church in the invisible world, comprising the gathered multitudes who have been saved by Christ in all ages; to which all the saints on earth by destiny belong; which is continually receiving accessions; and will at last be presented without spot to God. That is the Church which our Saviour has made his own, and by which God reveals his manifold wisdom to principalities and powers; that, the Church Catholic; and there is no other Church Catholic.

The coin we call a sovereign represents twenty shillings. If, at the caprice of either buyer or seller, the value of that coin could be made to fluctuate, and to represent two or seven or thirteen or thirty or any other number of shillings; all bargains and ledgers would be involved in hopeless confusion. It has been well said that words are the currency of thought. If controversialists are suffered to use the leading term in a controversy to signify more or less, one thing or another, at their pleasure; there may be abundance of sophistical declamation, but reasoning is impossible. No better example could be found, than is supplied by the word CHURCH.

In the New Testament we read of the Church at Cenchrea, the Church in Sardis, the Churches of Macedonia, the Churches of Judea. We meet also with such expressions as these: feed the Church, give none offence to the Church, tidings came to the ears of the Church. Substitute in any of these sentences the definition for the word, and the sense is clear; for example, the "congregation" at Cenchrea: but take some other examples of the use of the same word, and observe how different the result.

The Free Church of Scotland.

The Queen is the head of the Church.

The United Church of Great Britain and Ireland.

The holy Church throughout all the world.

There is not any member of the commonwealth, who is not also of the Church.—**HOOKE.**

The blow which has been dealt against the catholicity and therefore the essential character of our Church, as a sound branch of the Church of Christ.—**BISHOP OF EXETER.**

The most comprehensive of our Church's creeds.—**BISHOP OF EXETER.**

Our excellent Church.

The Free Congregation of Scotland.

The Queen is the head of a congregation.

The united congregation of Great Britain and Ireland.

The holy congregation throughout all the world.

There is not any member of the commonwealth, who is not also of a congregation of faithful men.

The blow which has been dealt against the catholicity and therefore the essential character of our congregation, as a sound branch of the congregation of Christ.

The most comprehensive of the creeds of our congregation.

Our excellent congregation.

To an Episcopalian sincerely desirous of understanding the subject of this pamphlet, the author would respectfully and urgently suggest the *great* importance of watching narrowly the use of the word CHURCH: and he ventures to recommend Dissenters about to enter into argument with Episcopalians, to bind their antagonists down to some definition of that word. An advocate of national ecclesiastical establishments kept to that sense of the word which it bears in the New Testament, and which is

given to it in the Prayer Book, is perfectly impotent. If Nonconformists, instead of tolerating the use of such absurd phrases as "the Church of England," would but insist—as all polemics have the right to do—on an exact definition of the leading term of the controversy, their opponents would be as helpless as was the Syrian host when smitten with blindness. "We must take care," says Pascal, "that the same word is not employed "in reasoning in two different senses. Nothing more "speedily and effectively nullifies the subtil tricks of "sophists, than this caution which it is necessary to use "at all times: and which alone is sufficient to expose and "destroy all kinds of ambiguities."*

Once there was but one Church on earth, the general assembly of believers at Jerusalem: but, immediately a Church was formed in Samaria, there were two Churches: and from that time they multiplied rapidly. *Now*, there are twenty thousand Churches in the world. The phrase, therefore, "one Church throughout all the world," is a fallacy: nor a fallacy only, but one of the pernicious heresies of early times, a heresy by which the world is plagued to the present day.

For, if each separate congregation be a Church, it has the powers and responsibilities of a Church; being free unto men, and subject to Christ alone: but if all congregations are to be woven into oneness, there must be one earthly head. If there be indeed "one holy "Church throughout all the world," there must be a

* "Il faut seulement prendre garde qu'on n'abuse de la liberté "qu'on a d'imposer des noms, en donnant le même à deux choses "différentes. * * * Rien n'éloigne plus promptement et plus puissamment "les surprises captieuses des sophistes que cette méthode qu'il faut "avoir toujours présente, et qui suffit seule pour bannir toutes sortes "de difficultés et d'équivoques."—*Pensées*, p. 1, art. 2.

president thereof. You may call him a universal bishop, or pope, or patriarch; but the existence of such a head is, indisputably, a sequence from your creed: and who can put in a plausible claim to such presidency, excepting the Pope? The unity of the Saints is a scriptural truth. It is a oneness in faith and affection, springing from a living union of the souls of believers to their exalted head: but from any intelligent belief in *one Church on earth*, the very next step is to Rome. In the year 1842, Henry William Wilberforce wrote as follows: "the doctrine of Holy Scripture and of the Church is this, that all Christians are bound to belong "to *one* outward and visible Church."* Of course he became a Catholic: and many men as sincere as he, have dwelt upon this same fiction, which your erroneous creeds had taught them, until it has become to their perverted vision, a thing of beauty and impassioned desire; and they have gone to seek it, where alone they could have any hope of finding it: how fruitlessly, I need not tarry to shew.

In reviewing the losses you have sustained by secessions to Rome, it would be illusory to estimate them merely by the rules of addition and subtraction. The Tractarian clergy have comprised, and do yet comprise, a large number of men remarkable for mental vigour, acuteness, and courage; men of too much discernment, and too much honesty, to allow of their remaining at ease in the half-acceptance of a principle. Such men are always influential. Their value is not to be reckoned arithmetically. If none but such devotees as Father Ignatius had quitted our ranks, we should have mourned only, not trembled; but when one very able man after another has gone over

* *Christian Unity*, by H. W. Wilberforce, p. 4.

to the opposite camp, and many like them are drawing nearer and nearer to the charmed circle, nothing short of infatuation can lead us to speak lightly of our losses and our danger.

Cardinal Wiseman, in a letter published lately in *The Tablet*, writes thus:—

“If ever there was a land in which work is to be done, and perhaps much to suffer, it is here. I shall not say too much, if I say that we have to subjugate and subdue, to conquer and rule an imperial race; we have to do with a will which reigns throughout the world as the will of old Rome reigned once; we have to bend or break that will, which nations and kingdoms have found invincible and inflexible. We have to gather for this work the rough stones of this great people, and to perfect them as gems for the sanctuary of God. It is good for us to be here, because a nobler field could not be chosen than England on which to fight the battle of the Church. What Constantinople, and Ephesus, and Africa were to the heresies of old, England is to the last, complex, and manifold heresy of modern times. Were it conquered in England, it would be conquered throughout the world. All its lines meet here, and therefore in England the Church of God must be gathered in its strength.”

The same writer has, I believe, affirmed, that more converts to Rome have been made within the last few years in England, than in the three preceding centuries. Where have these converts come from? Mr. Beale, a vestryman of St. James's, Westminster, publicly asserted—and the assertion has not to my knowledge been contradicted—that some two hundred clergymen had seceded and joined the catholics. Is there not a cause? Many of them have abandoned large emoluments; and almost all of them have had to rend asunder the ties of friendship, forfeit the advantages of position, and submit to great obloquy, as the consequences of their secession. To decry these men as hypocrites, is alike unreasonable

and unjust. No stronger evidence of conscientiousness has been given in the present age, than by many of the clergymen who have passed from the Establishment to Rome. Whether I have succeeded in tracing the connexion or not, there must be a *nexus* between the position they have abandoned, and that they have assumed. Undeniably, the one leads to the other. If in sailing down a certain channel, one vessel had drifted on a quicksand, the disaster might be explained as an accident: but if in the course of a few years, two hundred vessels had been lost on that quicksand, every man in his senses would admit the channel to be faulty and very perilous. That the Church of England—as it is misnamed—is a highway to Popery, is now a demonstrated fact. No sooner does your Church—as you erroneously call it—vigorously assert its own principles, than scores of the most strenuous advocates of those principles, declare that they cannot remain where they are, but *must* go forward to Rome. What further proof can you require, that the system to which you have been wedded, is sapping the Protestantism of your country, and guiding the nation back to Popery? Vainly will you oppose this ruinous process by petitions, and protests, and an occasional tumult at St. George's in the east, or elsewhere, about a stone altar, a piece of embroidery, or the ecclesiastical foppery of some pitiable man who flatters himself he can serve “the King eternal, immortal, and invisible,” by gown, and bands, and stole, and alb, and other the like effeminate trifles. These are things of despicable littleness, best left to the *Milliners' Journal* and *Punch*. The seat of the disease is not among them, but lies far deeper. Popery is gaining ground among us. It is now proved by a long and costly trial, that what is called

the Church of England, is the great nursery for Popery. "Who is on the Lord's side, who?" Let him renounce that book, which renders the refutation of Puseyism impossible, and the growth of Popery certain.*

* "Dr. Pusey's logic is unanswerable . . . the mischief must proceed onward to its logical conclusion, and the Church of England gradually be absorbed into the Papacy."

"These things with many more . . . are reopening the question, whether the Church of England *was* thoroughly reformed at the reformation and purged of the Romish element, and whether after all she is aught better than a feeder to the Papacy, a nursery of Romish priests, and a teacher of superstition up and down the world."

"The first remedy I propose is, *the immediate revision of the Book of Common Prayer.*" *Letter to Lord Palmerston*, by the Hon. and Rev. A. L. Powys, M.A., Trinity College, Cambridge, and Rector of Titchmarsh, pp. 27, 5, 12.

"The distinctive tenets of the 'Puseyite' scheme are based, with a logical accuracy of deduction which must defy refutation, upon those unscriptural assumptions of priestly authority and sacramental efficacy, which certain expressions in the Prayer-book too plainly countenance." See *Liturgical Purity*, &c., by J. C. Fisher, M.A., of the Middle Temple; assisted by Rev. Joseph Simpson, Incumbent of Holme Cultram, p. 22.

"Puseyism will never be refuted, while the Prayer Book remains unaltered." *Church of England Quarterly Review*, No. 81.

II.

CONFORMITY SIN AGAINST CHRIST, BECAUSE IT SUBSTITUTES HUMAN AUTHORITY AND HUMAN LAWS, FOR HIS AUTHORITY AND HIS LAWS.

Hæc enim est non verborum parva, sed rerum permagna, dissensio.—CICERO.

The pretended conversion of the kingdoms of the world to the kingdom of Christ in the fourth and fifth centuries, I look upon as one of the greatest *tours d'adresse* that Satan ever played, excepting his invention of Popery. I mean that by inducing kings and nations to conform nominally to Christianity, and thus to get into their hands the direction of christian society, he has in a great measure succeeded in keeping out the peculiar principles of that society from any extended sphere of operation, and in ensuring the ascendancy of his own.—ARNOLD.

WHEN a patron gives a living to a minister in Scotland, he is not thereby constituted the minister of the parish, but must first be appointed by the presbytery. There, as here, the establishment was for a long time thoroughly Erastian, doing the will of the State; so that no collision occurred: but in the time of Chalmers, the evangelical party gained a majority in the general assembly, and then came "the tug of war." A minister was presented to a benefice, but the presbytery refused to institute him, not deeming him a proper person. The synod and the general assembly, being successively appealed to, sustained the presbytery. The patron admitted the right of the clergy and elders thus to decline to induct his nominee, but required them to give their reasons, that a court of law might decide whether those reasons were sufficient. "Nay," rejoined the clergy and elders, "we, and not

"courts of law, are the proper judges of the qualifications
"of this man for spiritual duties; the most important
"points of inquiry, being such as courts of law take no
"cognizance of. To abandon this right would be, on
"our part, unfaithfulness to the crown rights of our Lord
"Jesus Christ." Thus sprang up the great Scotch controversy. Both parties saw the magnitude of the issue. The evangelical clergy declared, that for no earthly consideration would they forego their rights and duties as spiritual men; that to do this, would be treason against Christ. Lord Aberdeen, then in office, avowed in the House of Lords, that he would rather see the Church separated from the State, than concede the demands of the clergy. The politician was right, in maintaining that if the clergy took the pay of the State, they were the servants of the State; and must be subject to the State. The Churchmen were both right and wrong: wrong, in expecting both the gold and freedom; right, in asserting that they should be unfaithful to Christ, if they left the affairs of His kingdom to be controlled by statesmen. The only solution of the difficulty which truth permitted, was that attained when they triumphantly marched out of the Establishment, singing "the snare is broken, and we are escaped." The hundreds of seceding ministers passed through the streets in a body, to an appointed place of rendezvous; Dr. Chalmers was chosen moderator; and among the first words uttered by, I believe, the venerable Dr. Gordon—words which roused the whole assembly to the highest pitch of enthusiasm—were these, "Thank God, I'm a free man."

When a beneficed clergyman dies in England, who is to succeed him? That is for the patron to decide. There may be in the parish five hundred families, and £1000

a-year set apart for their religious instruction. The heads of those families, or many of them, may be very desirous that they themselves, their children, and other domestics, should be taught the way of God in truth, by some man of holiness, ability, and experience: but the patron, who may be a man of any character and creed, has a nephew whom he has "brought up to the church," as the cheapest way of providing for him, and with a view to this thousand a-year. The young man may have neither aptitude nor love for clerical work; yet, as a matter of course, he takes "the cure of souls." If *this* be not sin against Christ, what is? And yet this wickedness is committed among you daily. *Four out of five at least*—it is the estimate of one of yourselves—enter the church, because the profession was selected for them from their boyhood, not in consequence of any predilection or fitness on their part, but simply because it seemed good to their parents or guardians, to put them into the priest's office for a living.

Do you reply that the living cannot be held, excepting by one approved by the bishop? Try it, and you will find the bishop to be as helpless as the Scotch presbytery. You may prove that the young man haunts taverns, and plays unlawful games, and the like: the bishop cannot refuse him on that account. "The laws of England watch so jealously over the interests of patrons, and so little over those of the Church, that they compel bishops, except in cases so outrageous that they can hardly ever occur, to accept at once of the person first presented to them, and to commit the cure of souls to him by the process of institution."* How sad that even your

* Froude's *Remains*, Pt. 2, vol. i., p. 266. Blackstone's *Com.*, Bk. i. c. 11.

Evangelical bishops can dare, quite as a matter of course, to institute men as christian ministers, of whose fitness they KNOW, that they neither have, nor can have, any guarantee! How mournful that good men can be induced by five or ten thousand a year, thus to mock Him, whose eyes are as a flame of fire! And why will the very people, whose dearest religious rights are thus sacrificed to mammon, support these men in so polluting the altars of the living God?

As in the appointment of ministers, so in the reception of members and the excommunication of offenders, Protestant Episcopalians have betrayed their trust, and sold themselves to Cæsar. A church is not a parish, but a select assembly, a company of "special people", taken out of the world, an association of "faithful brethren," or "saints." "If," says Froude,* "any one were to search among his own acquaintance for those whom he considers least fit for clergymen, he would certainly find his reason for thinking so, was of a kind that he could not make good before a court of justice." So, if you ask why A and B are not fitted for Church membership, the reasons, though of the most valid kind, are just those of which a court of law would take no cognizance. Yet no man can be compelled to keep away from the communion in his own parish, excepting by a process of law. With the temporal courts, not with spiritual persons, rests the final decision of every man's right to the Lord's Supper. I have shewn previously that your establishment is not a Church, because a church is a congregation: I now shew, that it is as certainly without the character, as it is without the form, of a church of God: for a church of God is holy; whereas there is practically no

* *Remains*, Pt. 2, Vol. 1., p. 267.

guarantee for the religious character of either the ministers or members of the Establishment. The final appeal, as to the qualifications of both, is to a court of law: and therefore ministerial fitness among you is commonly left to accident, and discipline is but a name. Your establishment is not the kingdom of Christ, but merely a department of the dominions of Victoria. It is "of this world," which Christ has declared his kingdom is not.*

* I beg to be understood as speaking of the system. If a clergyman, a man of living faith and holy conduct, gather around him a company of regenerated men and women, they are—though under great disadvantages—a true church: especially if the minister succeed by his moral influence, in preventing the intrusion of the unholy to the sacramental table. But such a church exists despite the establishment, not by means of it; might at any time be utterly corrupted, by enforcing some of the laws of the establishment; and would live, and be purified and invigorated, if the establishment were destroyed. A church is one thing; an establishment, for giving pay and power to ten thousand congregations, quite another. To call the two combined a church, is mischievous sophistry.

"Quod Ecclesia Christi non sit, nisi eorum, qui in corpus Christi regeneratione sint consociati et coagmentati, manifestum est."—Bucer's *Scripta Anglicana*, p. 556.

III.

CONFORMITY SIN, BECAUSE THE REFORMATION OF THE
ESTABLISHMENT IS IMPOSSIBLE.

On any other footing than that of entire spiritual independence, I should hold a national church to be a moral nuisance.—
CHALMERS.

I can readily suppose that many an Episcopalian reading the last chapter would, in his heart say, "I admit very much of what is here affirmed; I mourn over that desolating evil, patronage; and our utter want of discipline; I long for improvement, and hope for it; my aim is to reform, not to destroy." The movement, at the head of which Lord Ebury has placed himself, may have given to many devout Episcopalians bright hopes; for his Lordship aims to render the morning and evening service, "consistent with common sense;" and to introduce some doctrinal changes, meaning I presume, to sweep away the popery of the baptismal and other formularies. *But all such changes would leave the root of the mischief undisturbed, and full of life.* For the establishment would still be a governmental establishment, and therefore, as I will prove to you, *necessarily* corrupt and unchristian. For, the monarch for the time being, *must be* its head. A governmental institution without the monarch for its head, no statesman would dream of permitting.* But

* "If we once admit the propriety of a connexion between the Church and the State, and at the same time deny the supremacy of the Pope, it seems almost to follow of necessity that we should admit the supremacy of the sovereign. The sovereign must in that case hold some position in the Church, and it can only be the highest. "It is not consistent with his sovereignty, that he should have a

if the head of the Church is appointed without any guarantee for religious character, you cannot make religious character the test of membership to the many: neither can you excommunicate the monarch, be he ever so wicked; for that were to cut off your own head. A true Church is holy; a governmental ecclesiastical establishment, is *of necessity* unholy: for if your door be kept so widely open as to admit a royal person, though he be a drunkard or a fornicator or profane, you cannot make godliness or even morality a pre-requisite to membership. Such would your position continue to be, if Lord Ebury's widest and brightest visions were realized: of which, however, there is not the slightest probability.

Paul no where writes with greater severity of rebuke, than where he reproves the Corinthians for tolerating the incestuous man: "Put away from among yourselves that "wicked person." If a person equally wicked were on the throne of this United Kingdom, instead of shutting him out of what you call the Church, you would compel him to come in; roundly telling him that he must be a member of your establishment, and take the sacrament with you, or he could not wear the crown. Let a man of vileness as unquestionable as that of the first two Georges, or—scarcely worse—the fourth George, be on the throne; and he is the head of what you call your Church. To your good sense, and your consciences, I put this question: Can that be a true Church, in which there neither is, nor can be any hindrance to such a man's occupying a place, and the very chief place? You cannot free yourselves from this disgraceful anomaly, without giving up the establishment.

"superior in his own kingdom."—Harold Browne *On the Articles*, Vol. II., p. 603.

There is another reason, why its transformation into a christian institution is impossible. As an establishment, it must lean on governmental power, which is the power of the truncheon and the sword. All the ecclesiastical laws, like other human laws, have a penalty annexed to them, which Cæsar must enforce in his own way. If you wish to know what those laws and penalties are, and how marvellously different from the laws of Christ, read that revelation of Antichrist, Burn's *Ecclesiastical Law*; and you will perceive also, how every portion of that law derives its power from the *ultima ratio regum*, physical force. But the kingdom of Christ disowns all violence, and utterly rejects physical force as a means of its extension or support. Christianity established by an earthly government is therefore, so far, dechristianized. "To attempt the propagation or support of gospel truth by secular force, or by establishing on behalf of Christians, as such, a monopoly of civil rights, is utterly at variance with the true character of Christ's kingdom, and with the teaching of Christ himself and his Apostles; and to attribute to them any such design, is to impugn their character, not merely as inspired messengers from heaven, but even as sincere and up-right men."*

A governmental ecclesiastical establishment *cannot* be holy, and *must* depend on physical force; and for these two reasons cannot possibly be reformed into a christian institution. I know these are unwelcome truths, but if they be truths, do not think me your enemy for proclaiming them, nor close your hearts against them. "Very carefully should we guard against restraining His spirit, as they do who shut their eyes and ears against evident

* Whately's *Kingdom of Christ*, p. xi.

"truth, being content to ignore what their Lord wishes to make known to them."*

The writer of these words—Calvin—was a man of immense influence. The State in which he lived contained only about twenty thousand inhabitants, and was on that account peculiarly favourable for his ecclesiastical experiment. With passionate desire, he longed for pure churches. Indeed his notions of church discipline were extravagantly rigid; an excess which would have wrought its own cure, had moral influence alone been employed. But the civil power was required to enforce the decisions of the church; and the results were, dissatisfaction and distress to all parties, and ultimate failure. In the spring of the year 1538 he declined to "administer the supper of the Lord in a city which would not submit itself to any kind of church discipline." For this contumacy he was banished, after a struggle best described in his own words:—

"It will be scarcely credible were I to relate to you even a very small part of those annoyances, or rather miseries, which we had for a whole year to endure. This I can truly testify, that not a day passed away in which I did not ten times over long for death."†

In the autumn of 1541 he was triumphantly restored: but no favourable conjunction of circumstances could render his project successful. The effort to make the body spiritual, while the head was secular, could not but fail.

"Geneva, 14 Mar., 1542. For the first month after resuming the ministry, I had so much to attend to, and so many annoyances, that I was almost worn out: * * * when, having overcome this

* Et surtout nous bien garder de restreindre son esperit, comme font ceulx qui ferment les yeulx et les oreilles a la vérité évidente, estans contens de ignorer ce que le Seigneur leur veult faire cognoistre. *Lettres de Calvin. Paris, tome prem., p. 55.*

† *Letters of Calvin, translated by Constable, Vol. 1. p. 242.*

labour, I believed that breathing-time would be allowed me, lo! new cares presented themselves, and those of a kind not much lighter than the former. * * * When we were considering about the introduction of ecclesiastical censure, and the Senate had given us a commission to that effect, these worthy persons [his colleagues] appeared in public to assent * * * afterwards, however, they were to be seen going about secretly, dealing separately with each of the senators, exhorting them not to lay at our feet the power which was in their own hands, (as they said), not to abdicate the authority which God had entrusted to them, and not to give occasion to sedition, with many other arguments of a like nature.”*

Nor was it in Geneva alone that Calvin found sources of trouble. The care of surrounding churches came upon him, and in them also the inevitable evils of alliance with the State were felt.

“23 Aug., 1542. I hear that the Deans of the Classes [at Berne] had been summoned to attend, for the purpose of hearing what the Senate has determined about the Supper of God. * * * What a fatal precedent they are about to set, if the brethren acknowledge the Senate as judge in the case of doctrine, so that whatever the Senate sanctions must be accepted and embraced by us as if proceeding from an oracle. What kind of a precedent, and how great a prejudgment must this be for posterity! Assuredly if we suffer the yoke in this manner to be imposed upon us, we treacherously betray the sacred ministry by our dissimulation. Nor shall we be able to excuse this perfidy either in the sight of God or before men.”†

The history of Geneva for centuries past is a sad and emphatic proof of the corrupt fruits that spring from the unhallowed alliance, which it is the purpose of these pages to expose. Calvin, whose name is not to be mentioned without honour, did not perceive that a church to be pure, must be free. By one error, which it is the high calling of Christians of the present day to discard, he bequeathed to his country a heritage of ecclesiastical corruption.

* *Letters of Calvin, translated by Constable, Vol. i. p. 292.*

† *Ibid.* pp. 321, 2.

IV.

CONFORMITY SIN, BECAUSE IT NECESSITATES SCHISM,
AND RENDERS CHRISTIAN UNION IMPOSSIBLE.

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”

I do not think it needful to dwell on the importance of christian union. Our Saviour's words, quoted above, require no comment.

Neither can it be requisite to argue, that Conformity is inconsistent with such union. We know that the sun shines. We know that the Episcopalian sect in England, fraternizes with no other. I content myself with summoning a single witness, Rev. Joseph Kingsmill, Chaplain of the Government Model Prison, whose frankness of speech it is impossible not to admire. The entire letter may be found in *Evangelical Christendom* for May, 1859.

“With respect to the difficulties in the way of joining the alliance, I am satisfied that with Evangelical churchmen, these are not its articles of subscription; for we who have signed ex animo the XXXIX. Articles of the Church, can have little scruple about the nine of the alliance which are involved in the former: nor yet its apparent want of practical aim, for every year the history of the alliance has proved increasingly and eminently practical, and shews moreover that the great head of the Church has owned its labour.

“I believe the great difficulty lies in our ecclesiastical establishment; and as we can never desire to see

"this substantially altered, the progress of the alliance amongst us must always be a failure.

"We have no difficulty in meeting Evangelical Christians in London, or New York, Geneva, or Berlin: but when it comes to fraternizing with Christians and Christian Ministers in our hamlets and villages, the oversight of which is entrusted to us alone by the constitution of our country, we are at once met by obstacles of the most serious kind.

"A clergyman in my position indeed has not had this difficulty: but I have always felt it due to the great body of Evangelical Churchmen, to act with them in the matter, and as if I had their practical difficulties in common."

Readily do these facts shape themselves into a syllogism.

Whatever is a fatal obstacle to Christian union is opposed to our duty to Christ:

"Our ecclesiastical establishment" is a fatal obstacle to Christian union:

Therefore "our ecclesiastical establishment" is opposed to our duty to Christ.

The sentiments Mr. Kingsmill has expressed are prevalent among the clergy. Happily they find very little favour elsewhere. Public opinion flows in the opposite direction, and the current is becoming stronger continually. "Never has there been so widely spread and earnest a desire among different sections of Christians, to attain a substantial unity. Even where conflicting opinions, and traditional maxims of sect render the prospect almost hopeless, still the *desire* is strongly felt."* "I am as tired as any man of mere Sect-life," exclaims Mr. Binney: and there are myriads of thoughtful Non-

* *Edinburgh Review*, Ap., 1862, p. 578.

conformists who from the veriest depths of their hearts echo his words, and long and pant for union which shall be Christian and not denominational. In truth, union so far as it is denominational, ceases to be Christian. "While one saith I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" But as Mr. Kingsmill—on this subject a true witness—shews, a real evangelical alliance cannot co-exist with "our ecclesiastical establishment." What would Paul have said of the schismatical Mr. Kingsmill? What he said of Peter when *he* had once acted as a schismatic, "I withstood him to the face, "because he was to be blamed."

"Separation, isolation, exclusion, are never pleasant words to a Christian ear. There are no earnest men of any party but long for the day when the 'unhappy divisions,' against which we annually pray, and which paralyze so much of the strength of Christianity, shall be healed up."*

* *Quarterly Review*, July, 1862, p. 259.

V.

CONFORMITY SIN, BECAUSE IT SANCTIONS AND PROMOTES THE HABIT OF FALSEHOOD.

The more I think of the matter and the more I read of the Scriptures themselves, the more intense is my wonder at the language of admiration, with which some men speak of the Church of England.—ARNOLD.

At the basis of all sound morality is truth: and among the most alarming evils of English society are the “white lies,” which are too common in fashionable circles; and the similar breaches of veracity, which are tolerated in commercial transactions. If the very men who are set apart as the teachers of religion, lead the way in these evil practices, the morals of the people are corrupted at the fountain-head. Who can wonder that a duchess for the sake of convenience, or a draper for the sake of gain, should fall into great laxity, if the example is set in the house of prayer? If truth be trampled on in the temple, it is not likely to be revered in the drawing-room and the shop.*

i.

A man-child is born into the world, and taken to Church. The sponsors and the priest make assertions which, as I will hereafter shew, are untrue: the child is trained to repeat some of them in the catechism: the

* “Valde itaque cavendum, ne quid hîc dicatur aut fiat temere, “ac vulgi tantum more, non mediate et omnino exanimò, uti coram “Deo.”—Bucer’s *Scrip. An.*, p. 481.

bishop sets his seal to them at confirmation. If, when the child is grown to manhood he trusts to these guides, he lives in the belief of "another Gospel which is not "another;" and when he goes down to the grave, if his life have been ever so wicked, the priest puts on a surplice, and gives God thanks that he has of his great mercy taken to himself the soul of the dear brother departed, whose body he, the priest, THEREFORE commits to the ground in hope. I know that many of your clergy pant and groan with their well-meant efforts to explain away these facts, but the words are far too plain to be thus set aside.* Read them for yourselves, and you will perceive that the system is fatally consistent throughout. From beginning to end, it is the popish *opus operatum*. Children are, as the Bishop of Peterborough expresses it, "made Christians" in baptism: taught by the catechism to designate themselves "the elect people of God:" assured of their regeneration by the bishop: the religious forms provided for their use are, as Dr. McNeile says, "constructed for true Christian believers:" they are married as Christians, as the rubric at the end of the service shews: if sick, visited as Christians: and when they die, buried as Christians. "Our Church," as I once heard a clergyman say in the presence of his diocesan and the clergy of the district, "introduces her members "into covenant with God by baptism; seals anew the "covenant by the rite of confirmation; furnishes them "with the pure milk of the word while they continue "within her pale; and when they die, she buries them

* "We were brought as infants to the holy font, children of wrath, "nameless, graceless. We quitted it, incorporated members of God's "household; adopted children of his elect family."—Bishop of Tasmania's (Nixon's) *Lectures on the Catechism*, p. 5.

"in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life: and what could you wish for more?" What indeed! But alas! this is delusion, as the people more than half suspect.* Popular opinion certainly holds, that there is no strict regard to truth in these priestly ceremonials: and can you wonder therefore, that people with such examples, should use words in "a non-natural sense?" The "not at home" of the duchess, and the adroitly turned sentence by which a dishonest shopman passes off a common fur for a sable, are not such dangerous breaches of veracity, as those which are practised every day according to the teaching of the Prayer-book. That even good men can thus tamper with evil, will be among the least intelligible facts of future history.

ii.

When a churchwarden enters upon his office, he is pledged to the fulfilment of its obligations thus:—

"You do solemnly and sincerely declare that you will truly and faithfully execute the office of churchwarden * * * and according to the best of your skill and knowledge, present such things and persons as to your knowledge are presentable by the laws ecclesiastical of this realm, and you make this declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true."

* "On almost every side" (may be heard) "words of keen though polished sarcasm, of hardly concealed contempt, together with occasional insinuations of actual dishonesty, but thinly veiled over by the conventional usages of social intercourse."—*Fisher*, page 121. The full influence of the Popery of the Prayer-book is not felt, because of the disbelief of many of the clergy, and more of the laity, in the forms which they use: but this, if the less of two evils, is itself an evil of terrible magnitude.

According to the 119th Canon, there are sent to churchwardens every year "books of articles * * * to "ground their presentments upon * * * to the intent that "having beforehand time sufficient not only to peruse "and consider what their said declaration shall be, but "the articles also whereupon they are to ground their "presentments, they may frame them at home both advisedly and truly, to the discharge of their own consciences, * * * as becometh honest and godly men."

Who are presentable? Among others the following:

All persons not Dissenters who, having no lawful or reasonable cause to be absent, do not frequent divine service on all Sundays and other holidays. (Canons 13, 90.) Every lay-person not being a Dissenter, nor a perjured churchwarden, nor a notorious offender, who does not receive the holy communion thrice every year. (Canons 22, 46.) All and every who offend their brethren either by adultery, whoredom, or drunkenness, or swearing, or any other uncleanness or wickedness of life. (Canon 109.) Clergymen who do not say or sing the Common Prayer at the times appointed by the Book of Common Prayer. (Canon 14.) Clergymen allowing any persons to be godfathers or godmothers who have not received the holy communion. (Canon 29.)

Do the churchwardens when, in terms the most explicit and solemn, they make these promises, mean to keep them? Certainly not. Does the archdeacon when he exacts these promises at the altar, expect or even wish them to be fulfilled? Certainly not. These ecclesiastical officers, are accomplices in known and wilful breaches of truth. There are more than ten thousand parishes in England and Wales; and about twenty thousand persons therefore, are led into this open and unquestionable

violation of truth every year, by "our excellent Church." No where else in all the world, as far as my knowledge goes, is such unveiled immorality, such open and extensive falsehood, tolerated. How is it that respectable men can endure a system so leprous?

iii.

A young man is finishing his course at the University, and is about to become a clergyman. The steps leading to the priest's office are a series of untruths. I make the assertion now, and will prove it hereafter.

iv.

There is no crime which ecclesiastical authority denounces with greater severity, than the detestable sin of simony. The buying and selling of livings is declared in the 40th Canon, to be "execrable before God:" and every clergyman before taking possession of a living is required to swear, that he neither has been, nor will be a party, directly or indirectly, to such purchase: and the oath ends with these words: "So help me God through Jesus Christ."

Turn to Lord St. Leonard's *Hand-Book*, page 63, and blush as you read.

"I do not think it necessary to point out to you the forfeitures and punishments which are incurred by simony. They are very heavy: and yet not sufficient to deter men from every day committing the crime which they are intended to punish."*

* "Ut enim Divus Gregorius pie scripsit, De sacerdotio nihil esse bonæ frugis sperandum, quod in ipsa vitietur radice. Omnino enim si volumus restituta Christi in Ecclesiis ministeria, profliganda erit sacrilega illa impietas, qua sacerdotia pro beneficiis conferuntur."—Bucer's *Scripta Anglicana*, p. 502.

V.

A bishop dies, and his successor has to be appointed. In such a transaction, if anywhere, it might be expected there should be the strictest regard for truth. Observe what actually takes place. The Queen grants to the Dean and Chapter license to elect: and at the same time a royal letter is sent to these holy men, naming the person they are to elect: and the man so nominated, whether they approve of him or not, they must elect within twenty days, under pain of being outlawed, stripped of all their earthly goods, and imprisoned. A meeting of the clergy is accordingly convened, *prayer is offered to God for guidance*, and then the reverend successors of the Apostles most obediently elect the nominee of the Premier. The choice is announced to the new bishop in the following words:

"We, the said Dean and Chapter * * * did cause all "and singular of the canons and prebendaries * * * to "appear on this — day of —: which said — day of — "being come, *and prayers to Almighty God before all "things being humbly offered up*, we the said Dean and "Chapter * * *, *after mature and serious consideration had "between ourselves* CONCERNING A FIT PERSON in that "behalf to be elected, did at length agree to give our "votes for you."

I appeal to you, my Episcopalian readers, and ask if these things can be tolerated without sin. You may never have thought much of them before. You may have rested complacently in the hackneyed phrases, "our excellent church," "our holy church." Be not beguiled by smooth words. Look at facts. Is it unfair to say that your petted establishment is the great patron and example of untruth?

VI.

CONFORMITY SIN, BECAUSE UNJUST TO NON-
CONFORMISTS.*Justitia—omnium est domina et regina virtutum.—CICERO.*

A boy stood on the banks of a pond, pelting the frogs that were croaking in the water; and was amazed that the frogs should think they had any grievance to complain of. The Lord Bishop of London, clad in lawn, taunts Dissenters with their supposed difficulty in finding a grievance. Dissenters beg to tell him that to every enlightened freeman, and yet more to every enlightened Christian, his Lordship is a great grievance. For Dr. Tait, as a man, a Christian, and a Christian minister, I have high respect. There are not many of the people of Great Britain who have observed his thorough evangelicalism; his admirable decision in proclaiming the great worth of human souls, and the trivial importance of steeples and chancels; and his excellent example in going into the high-ways to seek the lost, with more loving appreciation than the author of these pages. But for his official *status*, I cannot affect to have any other feeling than sorrow and pity: sorrow, that an excellent Christian should assume the illegitimate authority which his title implies;*

* Influence, the influence of truth and character, is the only power which the servants of Christ, as such, can lawfully possess. Authority they are forbidden to assume. They may be, should be *ἡγούμενοι*, leaders and ensamples: *κυριοι*, lords, they are forbidden to be. Matt. xx. 25.

pity, for so good a man, because while building with gold, silver, and precious stones with the left hand, he builds with wood, hay, and stubble with the right. Can it be that Dr. Tait's conscience fails to accuse him of bearing a title, and holding an office, thoroughly anti-christian: an office and title, quite as foreign to both the genius and precepts of the New Covenant, as the title and office of Cardinal or Pope? If Dr. Wiseman choose to protrude himself on the public with "great swelling words of vanity," assuming the empty title of Lord Archbishop of Westminster, I am grieved by so obvious a violation of the dictates of good sense, and of the Bible: but I suffer no civil wrong. But when Lord Palmerston gives to Dr. Tait a title offensive to more than half the people of the realm, and lavishes on him ten thousand a year of public property, and he uses the influence thus created in magnifying "our ecclesiastical establishment," and repressing and taunting Dissenters, I have, in addition, civil grievances to endure; and, as a citizen, I have the right to demand that such partiality should be brought to an utter end. If the bishop be disposed to make a catalogue of Dissenters' grievances, he may find a tolerably strong example to begin with, in the palace at Fulham.

If Nonconformists complain of Church-rates, it is stoutly denied that they have any good ground of complaint. A member of the government to whom I applied on the subject, defended the impost as follows. I give his words as embodying with brevity and force, the argument which seems to have greatest weight with the supporters of the tax.

"The church rate like all other local taxes is a charge upon the landlord, not upon the occupier; neither having just cause of complaint: the former

"having either inherited or purchased his property subject to this charge; the latter having in his calculations when hiring the land or tenement, deducted the same from the rent which he has agreed to pay to his landlord."

A house is to be let, the net rating of which is £63. A church rate of 3*d.* is levied annually. An Episcopalian rents the house, and receives in lieu of the church rate of 15*s.* 9*d.*, religious accommodation for himself and his family. A Dissenter renting it would have to pay the 15*s.* 9*d.* without receiving anything in return. The amount is small, but the principle involved is not the less oppressive.

A farm of 300 acres is to be sold. The church rate averages £5 yearly, equivalent to £100 capital. If an Episcopalian buy and occupy it, he obtains for that £5 yearly, religious accommodation for his household. If a Dissenter buy and occupy it, he gets no return for the £5 a year; that is to say, the farm is £100 dearer to him than to the Churchman.

Our murmurs we are told are unreasonable, because we buy or hire property subject to the tax. Why that is the very *gravamen* of our grievance. All over the land when we buy or hire property, we are compelled to pay a tax, *not to the nation, but to Episcopalians*; and under this injustice, Nonconformists have been left to suffer from the year 1688 to the present day. "That citizens should pay," says Dr. Merle D'Aubigné, "for that from which they derive no profit, for that by which they have no wish to profit, for that which possibly they repel, for that which they condemn: is that I ask an equitable law?" The amount in the case of church rates may be small, but the tyranny of the exaction is galling; as

Episcopalians would feel if they suffered, instead of inflicting it.*

As a citizen, I claim to be placed civilly on a footing of perfect equality with all other subjects, so long as I discharge the duties of citizenship. If a privilege be conferred by the state on my fellow-subjects, which I am by the state debarred from seeking, that is favouritism; and a grievance inflicted on me, unless it can be shewn that I have committed some offence which the state has a right to punish, or failed of some duty which it is the province of the state to reward. Every privilege of every kind given by the state to an Episcopalian as an Episcopalian, is a wrong done to me: and, as every one knows, such privileges are countless.

If the present Prince of Wales, or any future heir to the crown, were, by study of the word of God, to embrace the opinions of Dr. Chalmers, or of the Honourable and Reverend B. W. Noel, he must either violate his conscience, or renounce the throne. None but a member of the establishment is suffered to reign; and so loftily has the establishment, which thus fetters the

* The nobleman on whose defence of church rates I have commented, inherited his title and estates subject to the legal obligation of going to church twice every day. The Incumbent in every parish occupies his position, subject to the legal obligation of reading prayers every morning and evening, and is liable to be prosecuted at the Assizes if he neglect to do this. Almost all Episcopalians live in the constant breach of the weightier matters of their own law: and no classes of men in the kingdom are such flagrant violators of the law, as Churchwardens and Clergymen. It is not modest in these functionaries to press the legal obligation of rates, while four-fifths of the legal services for the sake of which the churches are to be kept in repair, are by them neglected. I wonder Dissenters have not replied to clerical persecution by putting in force 13 and 14 C 2, c 4, or 1 Eliz. c 2; the former rendering a Clergyman's omission of duty an indictable offence: the latter inflicting the penalty of six months' imprisonment for the first offence, twelve months for the second, and imprisonment for life for the third.

monarch, reared its head, that it not merely takes its place beside the sovereign, but claims precedence. It is *ego et meus rex* that we still hear, Church and Queen, not Queen and Church. The consequence is, that through all classes of society, from the Prince of Wales down to the stable-boy, the establishment assumes an importance and a right of intermeddling, to which its character gives it no claim; and often does it dare to insinuate a charge of deficient loyalty, against all who repudiate its authority. If the arrangement now existing were reversed, and a law passed that the sovereign should be a congregationalist, how eloquently and vehemently would Episcopalians denounce the violence done to the conscience of the highest person in the realm, and the insult flung in the face of all who are not congregationalists!

The population of England and Wales is about eighteen millions. It is computed that about three millions and a half attended Episcopalian places of worship on the 30th of March, 1851. Make any hypothetical addition you please, even the most extravagant, for absentees. Raise the number to five, or if it be wished, six millions: and still the following startling facts emerge. Five millions sterling, of national property, are year by year lavished on the six millions, in which the remaining twelve millions have no share. If this huge mass of wealth were taken from Episcopalians, and given to the Wesleyans or the Catholics, Dr. Tait would not need a microscope to discover the grievance.

To this enormous partiality must be added numberless chaplaincies; professorships; a thousand fellowships worth, on an average, £200 a year each;* public schools; &c., &c.;

* A gentleman who won the scholarship in Mathematics and Natural Philosophy at the London University in the year 1855, and its Gold

all which are either integral parts of, or appendages to the establishment; and Episcopalians, instead of walking humbly, as becomes men thus subsidized, in the presence of Dissenters who pay their own way, assume that they are the dignified class of society. Exceptions there are, and noble exceptions, and many; but as a rule, Churchmen seem to think that there is something very ennobling in their position: and however strange the fact, it is a fact, that they are as truly a caste in England, as the Brahminical order is in the east; a caste saying to their neighbours "stand by, for we are better than ye;" a caste employed directly and indirectly in thwarting the success in life of all who will not bow down to their idol. I am never consulted by man or woman on the question of Dissent—and such consultation is no unfrequent occurrence—without telling the inquirer first, and most plainly, to count the cost of Nonconformity. The advice is ever, in substance, as follows: "If you mean to act firmly as a Dissenter, you will assuredly lose caste. You may meet with toleration and condescension, but even that is doubtful.

Medal in 1857, came out as fifth Wrangler in the University of Cambridge in 1858. In his college, it has been the practice to give a fellowship to every man who has taken place among the first six Wranglers. Of him, it is not too much to say, that in moral and religious character he was surpassed by no undergraduate and equalled by few. The Cambridge University Act, *i.e.* the 19 and 20 of Vic. cap. 88, does not forbid that gentleman's being made a fellow; but the college has subsequently decreed that "every Fellow previously to his admission shall declare that he is *bona fide* a member of the Church of England." The value of foundation Fellowships, judged of by the average number of years for which they are held, must be much more than a thousand pounds each. Here then is a gentleman of unquestioned excellence, and well proved scholarship, deprived of a position worth much more than £1000, because he will not declare himself a member of the Church of England. And yet it is intimated that we are unreasonable people, if we are not satisfied with our civil position.

"You will certainly find many of the avenues to success in life, closed against you. If you are not prepared to suffer for conscience sake, you had better keep away from the strait gate of Nonconformity." Dissenters could suggest to Dr. Tait, that he would do wisely to speak of that only which he understands. Many of them could inform him, that they were persecuted for their Nonconformity in childhood; that in later life they have found they must sacrifice truth, or be shut out from the prizes of the Universities, and from all such pathways as he has climbed: they could assure him that their lives have been happy in a constant course of civil degradation, because they have cheerfully made the sacrifice to Him, who gave himself for them. For themselves they heed not the injustice; but as parents, they utter an indignant protest against the partial and unholy ecclesiastical laws of their country, and the caste which they create. When they look at their children, and hear the bishop, clad in lawn and revelling in an income of ten thousand a year, telling them they have no grievances, they may be forgiven if their patience is exhausted.

VII.

TO HUNDREDS OF MY COUNTRYMEN WHO HAVE RE-
CENTLY GONE FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT TO ROME.

GENTLEMEN,

I deem it possible that these sheets may fall beneath your eye, and crave your attention to a few words of honest expostulation and suggestion. Carefully have I looked into some of the pamphlets by which some of you have explained the change you have undergone; and I think I see clearly how you have been led to your present position, and am able to put the subject before you in a light, in which the members of the Establishment—to whom chiefly or solely your intercourse was limited—could not. Assume their principles, and I admit there was, in reason, no course open to you but that you have followed.

Before you decided on that course your minds were probably absorbed by, and intently occupied in, the investigation of theological opinions, till many of the landmarks of religious belief seemed to be no longer stationary, but in motion: and I can readily suppose that when first you took refuge in the assumed infallibility of Rome, you felt as the mariner does when the tornado is succeeded by a calm. But probably by this time you have been agitated by many a fear, that after all you have missed your way, and mistaken a false peace for “the peace of God.” Popery, to those who have not only gone behind the scenes, but carried thither a considerable amount of biblical knowledge, *must* methinks

at times prove very unsatisfying: and possibly you are not now indisposed, as you remember the everlasting consequences that are pending, to review the whole subject at issue.

Your error was this: you did not investigate your *data*. You were logical but not philosophical. Your syllogisms were sound; but your premises rotten. What you accepted as first principles, were falsities. I have given some examples, in the first chapter of this pamphlet; and to them and the similar assumptions which the Establishment taught you to regard as axioms, I beseech you at length to direct the most searching inquiry. Men and brethren, you have gone out of the way; but it is not yet too late to retrace your steps; and instead of tarrying amid the mists of Anglicanism, in which formerly you were bewildered and lost, you may come out into the clear and beautiful light of the Christian Scriptures; light undimmed by the errors and puerilities of patristic theology. To you it may be given to see that "the holy Scriptures, without ecclesiastical laws and ancient fathers, are the supreme authority for all Christendom." Now, you are like men in a deep mine, with dim tapers for your light. Earnestly and affectionately I call on you to come up out of that mine, into the light and warmth of the sun.

Oh! could you know the blessedness of mind and heart which is to be found in genuine religious freedom! No words would then be adequate to express the jubilant emotion, with which you would seek and accept the divine emancipation you need, and may even yet enjoy.

VIII.

TO CLERGYMEN.

Temeritas in assentiendo, turpis est.—CICERO.

“Why do ye transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?”

GENTLEMEN,

Baptismal regeneration is unquestionably one of the doctrines of your Prayer-book. To all persons without the pale of the Establishment, it seems as plain as the light, that the regeneration affirmed at the font and in the catechism, is that change of nature by which alone we can become, in the truest sense, Christians. It is called “spiritual regeneration;” a being “born again;” and said to be the change, by which the children of Adam become “members of Christ, children of God, “and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.” If these, and the similar phrases employed, do not denote the effectual operation of divine grace on the heart, there are no words, either in the Bible or out of it, which do. Nonconformists, therefore, are utterly amazed that any clergyman should call in question the views of baptism propounded at length by Dr. Mant, circulated through the land by “the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,” and defended by such men as the bishops of Exeter and Oxford. Some of you, however, do hold other views; but still, you believe in baptismal regeneration in some sense or other.

The chief scriptural plea for that dogma, is found in our Saviour's words to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." A few other passages may be adduced in support of the tenet in question; but this is *the* proof text.

I submit to you that those words, uttered before christian baptism was instituted, contain no reference to baptism: but that, as Calvin says, the two words "water" and "spirit" relate, not to two things, but to one and the same thing; the latter expressing literally, what the former expresses metaphorically. Speaking to a master in Israel, our Lord might well assume that his auditor would know, that such was the mode in which the seers were accustomed to foretel, the blessings of the kingdom to come: for example,*

Metaphor.

Its meaning.

The wolf shall lie down
with the lamb and the leopard
with the kid.

They shall not hurt nor
destroy in all my holy
mountain.

I will pour water on him
that is thirsty and floods
upon the dry ground.

I will pour my spirit on
thy seed; and my blessing
upon thine offspring.

I will sprinkle clean
water upon you.

A new heart also will
I give you.

Except a man be born
of water.

And (or even) of the
spirit

That he might cleanse it
by the washing of water.

By the word.

So far, you will perceive, is it from being certain that the words under inquiry relate to baptism, that if that

* Numberless other examples may be found by turning over the pages of the prophets.

rite had never been appointed, you would have found no more difficulty in explaining them, than you do in explaining the similar sayings of God by the lips of Isaiah, and Ezekiel, and Paul.

The Apostle Peter teaches us that men are "born again" by means of the word of God." Clearly therefore, if the new birth be in baptism, infants ought not to be baptized, because they are wholly incapable of receiving the word of God. On your own principles, baptism as commonly administered by you is invalid, since the element of water being present, another essential element of regeneration is wanting. Comparing our Lord's words with Peter's, the conclusion would seem inevitable, that regeneration cannot be in *infant* baptism. And of all the many examples of adult baptism which are constantly occurring, I never met with, or heard of one, in which the person baptized said he was born again in baptism. The unavoidable inference seems to be, that baptismal regeneration is a fiction.

And if you will turn to the story of Nicodemus, you will perceive that the Great Teacher is speaking of that which is indispensable to salvation. When elsewhere he says, "he that believeth not shall be damned," we do not understand him to mean that faith is *generally* necessary to salvation. Nor have we any right to limit his words, by saying that it is *generally* necessary to be born of water. Whatever this birth may be, we know from his most solemn assertion, that it is absolutely necessary; with which assertion his language to Peter agrees, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Adopt the interpretation of the Prayer-book, and you make our Lord to affirm, what I presume you do not believe, that no man hearing Christ's words can be saved,

who is not baptized. Accept the interpretation for which I have contended, and his words are in harmony with the language of the Old Testament, and free from all difficulty.

Suffer me also to remind you that while all Non-conformists, to whose opinions you cannot be indifferent, regard baptismal regeneration as a most dangerous tenet; there is among yourselves such wide diversity of sentiment as should make you pause, and indeed refrain from employing again, amidst this uncertainty, the confident language of your formularies. Mr. Gorham holds that unless infants are regenerated before they are taken to the font, baptism is of no use whatever to them. Yet is he allowed, strange to say, to remain as a minister in the establishment: a decision which, as Dr. Pusey has truly said, "denies that there is any certainty, that "any particular infant, derives *any* benefit, from the "sacrament of baptism." A young man went to the Archbishop of Canterbury—then a bishop—for ordination; and thus avowed his faith. "At the font it was that "we put on Christ, and were regenerated or made new "creatures in him." Dr. Sumner objected to this very moderate assertion of a doctrine, which every clergyman has to affirm, every time he appears at the font. Alford on Titus, 3. 5, writes, "It is in the font, and when we "are in it, that the first breath of the new life is drawn." The Bishop of Exeter says, "The doctrine of spiritual "regeneration in baptism is the very keystone of the "whole system:" the *Record* Newspaper says, "it is a "doctrine of Rome and of Devils."*

Gentlemen, amidst all the difficulty which you know

* Bishop of Exeter's *Pastoral Letter*, pp. 44, 13, 72. Pusey's *Royal Supremacy*, p. 13.

belongs to this subject; the certainty, as many think, that no trace of any baptismal regeneration is to be found in the Bible; the sore perplexity which very many of you feel in relation to the whole subject, I submit to your most serious consideration whether it be not your obvious duty, whatever bishops and government may enjoin, and whatever personal risk or loss you may incur, resolutely to refuse to utter once again the words of your baptismal service; and with equal determination, to abstain from the use of your catechism. A short time since, this town was placarded with the announcement of collections for the "Cambridge Old Schools," which are said to contain 1348 children. Every one of those children is probably taught to say, that he or she was made in baptism a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. If that be wholly untrue, as it is, and as many of you believe it to be; how will you answer to God, if you help in any way, to implant that flattering falsehood in the undying souls of those 1348 children?*

* "Jubentur compatres et commatres renunciare Sathanæ, et profiteri fidem pro infantibus, ut dum infantes rogantes, an renuncient diabolo, et ejus operibus, &c. Et an credant in Deum patrem, et filium, et Spiritum sanctum, ipsi vice infantium respondeant. At nec istud docet Scriptura, quantumvis sit antiquæ observationis; et rationem in se nullam habet."—Bucer's *Scrip. An.*, p. 480.

"It cannot, we submit, be denied that * * * the old ecclesiastical figment of baptismal regeneration deserves to be regarded as the very ideal, the *ne plus ultra* of Sacramental error and depravity. * * * It was in truth the very root of that stupendous system of ungodly superstition, which overspread the entire face of Christendom, and of which the Papacy itself was but the crowning climax."

"Neither among the eastern offices of baptism, which I know well * * * nor, to the best of my belief, among those of the west, is there one, which so unequivocally asserts the unconditional regeneration of an infant, as our own offices."—Quoted by *Fisher* from *Neale*.

And if you can—as I hope for the truth's sake you cannot—reconcile your consciences to the utterance and inculcation of the sentiment I have called in question, still does there remain the sponsorial difficulty. A clergyman appears at the font to christen a child. Three sponsors are present. Addressing them he says:

“Dost thou in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works? &c.”

Each of the three sponsors replies, “I renounce them all.”

Is that true? Do you not know, as well as you know anything, that many of them have not renounced the devil for themselves? And if they have, do they, can they renounce the devil for that infant?

Passing by the confession of faith, with its unscriptural article, “the resurrection of the flesh,” I come to the next question, which the priest ludicrously puts to the baby:

“Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?”

“Romanism and rationalism are, at the present moment, fearfully prevalent throughout the land. Both, it is believed, are largely fostered by the sacerdotal and sacramental tendencies of the Prayer-book, * * * both, moreover, are likely to be perpetuated indefinitely, by the continued use in our various schools and other educational institutions, of a catechism so largely pervaded by the sacramental element, and—we are truly sorry to add—so entirely devoid of any distinct enunciation of, or even allusion to, the grand essential doctrines of the gospel.”

“Men who in the common business of life act with unswerving consistency * * * hesitate not, in their more solemn capacity as the religious instructors of the people, to assert, as true in every instance, that which they hold to be false in many, and admit to be doubtful in all. They deem themselves justified *theologically*, in pronouncing every infant whom they baptize to be spiritually regenerated, when their avowed belief at the same time is, that ‘spiritual regeneration’ actually occurs in some cases only at baptism, and is necessarily connected with it in none.”—*Fisher*, pp. 541, 104, v. 106.

Each of the three sponsors replies, "that is my desire:" and after this matchless jumble, to which I do wonder that any thinking Protestant should submit, the priest christens the infant, and declares it regenerated.

These forms are not scriptural. That is admitted by all. The custom of godfathers, says Hooker in the 5th book of his *Ecclesiastical Polity* and the 65th section, is no more instituted of God, than the signing of childrens' foreheads with a cross. "It would be difficult," writes the bishop of Tasmania in the fifth page of the work quoted above, "to say with any degree of certainty, at what period the office of sponsors was established in the "Primitive Church." *The Record*, in its zeal against Papists and Tractarians, declares in its leading Article of August 22, 1850, that, "they cannot allege that there "is a single direction in scripture to baptize an infant "at all." That eminent man, Bucer, who was made Regius Professor of Divinity, at Cambridge, in the year 1549; who was buried in Great St. Mary's Church with great funereal pomp; whose body was dug up and publicly burned in the reign of Mary, his tomb being demolished; and whose tomb was afterwards rebuilt by order of Elizabeth, reviewed the Book of Common Prayer; and the review has been partly translated by Arthur Roberts, M.A. At pages 23 and 24, you may find the following sentences:—

"It is not reasonable in itself that you should inter-rogate him who understands not what you say, and that another should answer for him what he is just as little aware of, and that this should be done in matters of greatest moment."

"The infants indeed are alive, but they understand just as little as the dead, either the questions which are

“put to them by the minister, or the answers which are
 “given for them by the godfathers and godmothers. And
 “this preposterous manner of proceeding,” &c.

You know, gentlemen, whence these distressing absurdities are borrowed;* and should you go again with an infant and sponsors to the font, I suspect conscience will trouble you with that ancient and divine remonstrance, “Who hath required this at your hands? Bring no more
 “vain oblations.”

* I extract a few sentences from the Romish baptismal service :

“Ordo baptismi parvulorum. * * * Postea interrogat baptizandum
 “nominatim, dicens: N. Abrenuntias Satanæ? Respondet Patrinus:
 “Abrenuntio. * * * Subinde expresse nomine baptizandi Sacerdos dicit:
 “N. Vis baptizari? Respondet Patrinus: Volo.”

The sense in English is as follows:—

Form for the baptism of children. * * * Afterwards the priest questions the child to be baptized by name, saying: John, Do you renounce the devil? The sponsor replies: I do. * * * Then the name of the child to be baptized being expressed, the priest says: John, Do you wish to be baptized? The sponsor answers: I do.

IX.

TO EPISCOPALIAN PARENTS.

"What thing soever I command you, observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto."

Fathers and Mothers,

You are the guardians of your children. You cannot devolve the responsibility on a priest, nor on that undefined something called "the Catholic Church." *You* are the persons whom God does, and will hold accountable, for keeping your sons and daughters out of the way of noxious error, and in the way of truth.

I have presented in the foregoing pages evidence of the great distrust, and indeed dread, with which some clergymen regard the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. Let me put before you one other extract. It is taken from a Tract by Rev. J. C. Ryle, Rector of Helmingham, Suffolk. The title is, "*A Guide to Churchmen about Baptism and Regeneration.*"

"I see fresh reason continually for dreading the doctrine that all baptized persons are regenerate. I hear of laymen who once did run well, losing their first love, and appearing to make shipwreck of their faith. I hear of ministers, who once bade fair to be pillars in the Church, stumbling at this stumbling-stone, and marring all their usefulness. I see the doctrine leavening and spoiling the religion of many private Christians, and insensibly paving the way for a long train of unscriptural notions. I see it interfering with every leading doctrine of the Gospel;—it encourages men to believe that election, adoption, justification, and the indwelling of the Spirit, are all conferred on them in baptism;—and then, to avoid the difficulties which such a system entails, the fulness of

these mighty truths is pared down, mutilated, and explained away; or else the minds of congregations are bewildered with contradictory and inconsistent statements. I see it ultimately producing in some minds a mere *sacramental Christianity*,—a Christianity in which there is much said about union with Christ, but it is a union begun only by baptism, and kept up only by the Lord's supper,—a Christianity in which the leading doctrines that the Apostle Paul dwells on in almost all his epistles, have nothing but a subordinate position,—a Christianity in which Christ has not His rightful office, and faith has not its rightful place. I see all this, and mourn over it unfeignedly. I cannot think that the subject I am urging on the reader's attention is one of secondary importance. And once more I say, I cannot leave him without a solemn appeal to his conscience, whoever he may be, into whose hands this tract may fall."

Turn now to the Prayer-book :

"Almighty and everlasting God, * * * give thy Holy Spirit to this infant that he may be born again."

The baptism follows :

"Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate, * * * let us give thanks."

"We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit."

"My baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."

"Almighty and everlasting God"—it is the language of the bishop—"who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by water and the holy Ghost."

Can language be plainer? The minister pronounces the child regenerate. The child is taught to affirm that it was made a child of God in baptism. And the bishop declares to God that it was so regenerated. And yet many of your clergy will say, with Mr. Ryle, that they see fresh reason continually for dreading the doctrine that

all baptized persons are regenerate. Why then do they say that they are?*

If you knew for certainty that your children were heirs to a large earthly inheritance, you would probably make them acquainted with their position. But if you suspected a flaw in their title, you would take great care to guard them against expectations that might be unfounded, and against the subsequent bitterness of disappointment. If it be *certainly* true, that your children were made children of God and heirs of heaven in baptism, they ought to be informed of so great a privilege; *but* if it be untrue, or even doubtful, how unkind and sinful is it in you to teach them to repeat the confident assertion of the catechism, and take them to the bishop that his influence may be employed in inducing them to believe it! For the assertion cannot be regarded as of slight importance. It is either a grand truth of the very highest worth; or it is among the worst of all falsehoods. *If it be not true, it is poison, administered by you, to the souls of your own sons and daughters.* Throw your glance over the whole region of truth. The one question, as to which it is of the first importance to your children that they should lie under no mistake is, their relation to God; that very question of which the second, third, fourth, sixth, and eighteenth answers of the catechism, and the bishop's first prayer in confirmation, treat. Now priest, catechism, and bishop, teach that children taken to the font, are then

* Mr. Ryle says, p 10, that the Prayer-book supposes—and therefore I presume he *supposes*—all parents and sponsors who come to the font to be believers. And yet he shews that he *believes* no such thing. Mr. R. therefore seems, when at the font, to believe one thing and suppose another. And this he calls “charitable supposition!” Charitable! as though it were charity to affirm what we do not believe. Alas! that excellent men like Mr. R. should so bewilder themselves and others.

and there regenerated. I have endeavoured to shew that we have no evidence, that a single child or adult was ever regenerated in baptism. And you know, that in the subsequent lives of the greater part of the children taken to the font, we have all the evidence which the case admits of, that they were not there born again. The human heart is ever prone to say, "peace, peace, when there is no peace." Oh! sad, therefore, is the position of those children, whose fathers and mothers teach them, just when their ductile minds receive the most permanent impressions, that they were made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, in baptism.*

* The reasons which should lead you to keep your children away from Font, and Catechism, and Bishop, should also prevent you from becoming sponsors. For "these things," as Bucer says, "are done unto God, and the promises are made to God." And, sad to say, the senselessness—*amentia* as Bucer writes—is as great as the solemnity. You know you cannot fulfil the promises. How therefore can you venture to make them unto God? "He that hateth suretyship is sure."

X.

TO UNDERGRADUATES IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, WHO INTEND TO "TAKE ORDERS."

Arnold "scruples doing what I advise him, which is to put down the objections by main force whenever they arise in his mind."

Scarcely any Anglican minister ventures on any free examination of these guarded writings.—NOEL.

Gentlemen,

I ask you to accompany me in an examination of the course before you, if you become clergymen.

The first step is the Deacon's ordination; in order to which the candidate must subscribe as follows:—

"1. That the Queen's majesty under God is the only
"supreme governor of this realm, and of all other her
"highness's dominions and countries, as well in all spiritual
"or ecclesiastical things or causes, as temporal; and that
"no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate
"hath, or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, preeminence or authority, ecclesiastical or
"spiritual, within her majesty's said realms, dominions,
"and countries.

"2. That the book of common prayer, and of ordering
"of bishops, priests, and deacons, containeth in it nothing
"contrary to the word of God, and that it may lawfully
"be used, and that he himself will use the form in the
"said book prescribed, in public prayer and administration
"of the sacraments, and none other.

"3. That he alloweth the book of articles of religion
"agreed upon by the archbishops and bishops of both

“provinces, and the whole clergy, in the convocation
“holden at London, in the year of our Lord God one
“thousand five hundred sixty and two; and that he
“acknowledgeth all and every the articles therein con-
“tained, being in number nine and thirty, besides the
“ratification, to be agreeable to the word of God. And
“for the avoiding of all ambiguities, such person shall
“subscribe in this form and order of words, setting down
“both his christian and surname, viz., ‘I, N. N., do
“willingly and ex animo subscribe to these three articles,
“above-mentioned, and to all things that are contained
“in them.’”

These are very plain words, and the subscription to them admits of no honest evasion. It must be made willingly, and ex animo.

Once there was a semblance of truth in the assertion that the monarch was supreme governor in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things in the realm; for the law not only proclaimed the monarch to be head of the church, but bound every person in the land, under heavy penalties, to belong to that establishment. Elizabeth sent men to prison and to death, because, admitting her supremacy civilly, they denied it ecclesiastically. But for the last 170 years, this pretence of universal spiritual supremacy has been abandoned. Some account of the church of which I am minister, was printed by my predecessor in 1846; and in that brief account he says, “We object to the supremacy of the King or Queen in the Established Church, as interfering with the authority of Christ.” The same testimony is borne by ten thousand similar churches, which meet several times every week, conduct religious services when and as they please, admit members or exclude them, and in short, are legally and practically,

in things spiritual, quite independent of the Queen. In the Wesleyan Conference, there are very many ecclesiastical or spiritual things or causes decided every year. The Queen has no more right to interfere with any one of them, than the Conference has to restrict the sovereign's power of proclaiming peace or war. Some Dissenting churches, to vindicate their freedom, have refused to observe Fast-days, because the monarch has *commanded* the observance; and the law of the land gives them the right to refuse. There can be no dispute as to the fact that there are many ecclesiastical or spiritual things and causes in this country, over which the Queen has neither lawful nor actual control. Can you then, affirm willingly and from your soul, that Victoria is supreme governor in all ecclesiastical or spiritual things or causes in Great Britain?

You will be required also to assert that the Pope has no jurisdiction, power, preeminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within the Queen's dominions. Formerly, any one who ascribed such power to the Pope, was liable to heavy punishment; any one obtaining bulls from Rome, was guilty of high treason; the possession of popish books, beads, crucifixes, or pictures, was unlawful; all popish priests were forbidden the realm; to say mass, or send a child to be educated as a papist abroad, was a high crime; and all persons of all sorts were bound to go to church. Such were the laws which gave verisimilitude to subscription in the days of Elizabeth. But *now*, these persecuting laws which had fallen into desuetude, have been annulled, many of them by the 7 and 8 Vic. c. 102, and the 9 and 10 Vic. c. 59; and Catholics are, by law, allowed to yield to the Pope, any amount of deference they choose, in things spiritual.

Hence the Pope enjoins Cardinal Wiseman, to hold and teach, the sinlessness of the Virgin Mary; and I have heard him preach that dogma in Finsbury chapel, English law protecting him in so doing. And surely the Pope has some jurisdiction and authority in Malta; and Lower Canada; and Ireland; and in the Mauritius, where there are, I believe, a bishop and nine priests of the Catholic church, paid £2,500 a year by the government. If he have no spiritual jurisdiction in Victoria's dominions, he has none in France or Spain. How can you then assert that the Pope has no ecclesiastical or spiritual power or authority in the Queen's realms, dominions, and countries; and add that you make the declaration willingly, and from your soul?

You have further, as a stepping-stone to the Deacon's office, to affirm that the Book of Common Prayer, including the ordination-services, and the XXXIX. Articles, contains in it nothing contrary to the word of God. And as shewing the great stress laid upon this point, I shall cite the words which you will be compelled publicly to read, if ever you hold "a living."

"I, A. B. do hereby declare my unfeigned assent and "consent to all and every thing contained and prescribed in "and by the book entitled The book of Common Prayer." Now this book, *in addition to the dubious tenets I have already adduced*, prescribes services twice every day, and the strict observance of saints' days: it contains the Athanasian creed; the forms for the visitation of the sick, in which the priest asserts that he has power to absolve from sin: it declares that every person born into the world deserves God's wrath and damnation: it speaks very dogmatically on the many theological questions about which good men are divided in opinion, and respecting

which there has been the greatest diversity of sentiment among your own clergy: it affirms that the effect of Christ's ordinance is not taken away by the wickedness of the minister: and in its ordination service it makes the bishop presumptuously say, that he confers the Holy Ghost. These are some of the difficulties which subscription involves. Read and ponder the subjoined account of them:

"The solemn asseveration exacted from all who enter upon the clerical office in the Church of England, that an 'unfeigned assent and consent' are given 'to all and every thing contained in the 'Book of common Prayer,' may well make one stand aghast.

"The terms exclude all degrees in conviction, all doubts, all scruples; they leave no margin for explanation or modified submission. He who disbelieves one single sentiment, or disapproves or but faintly approves, at the time of subscription, one single particular contained in the book, 'lies to the Holy Ghost.'

"Here is a book containing some hundreds of propositions expressed or implied. It is confessedly a human compilation. Fallible beings (as Johnson remarks) will fail somewhere. It is not within the compass of moral possibility that fallible mortals should draw up documents of such extent and variety without falling into many errors. And it is to the last degree unlikely that the idiosyncrasy of any man's mind should be such, that after the full and unfettered exercise of his own judgment, it might happen to his thoughts to run in precisely the same grooves, accepting as truths precisely the same mistakes, and seizing exactly the same real truths, without a single exception on the one side or the other; as did the minds of those men who set forth this book.

"Yet the terms of subscription are studiously so adjusted that nothing less than a complete conviction of the truth of every proposition, and a perfect approval of every particle of the contents, as embodied in the words 'assent and consent to all and everything,' can enable any man with a clear conscience to comply. He must either have weighed every proposition contained in the book, or subscribe he knows not to what. If he has intelligently and maturely investigated every particular, it appears passing strange, that of some hundreds or thousands of propositions set forth by fallible minds, and therefore tinged more or less with error, he should

arrive at an absolute conviction that every one is true; and as unfeignedly *approve all* and *everything* that the book contains. If he subscribe without giving himself the trouble of investigation, his subscription involves the guilt of falsehood. It is in the nature of things impossible for a man to assent to that as true, and approve that as good, of which at the time he is ignorant. So long as he is unacquainted with the matter offered to his judgment, he can neither assent nor dissent, neither consent nor disapprove. How therefore the profession of assent and consent under such circumstances is reconcileable with integrity, we are utterly at a loss to understand.”*

Suppose all these obstacles overleaped; the doubts connected with them put down by main force; and that you have entered on clerical employment with a tremulous and humiliating consciousness of past prevarication; still there would await you the constant obligation, to use that baptismal service which many clergymen dishonestly mutilate;† to instruct the young people in the catechism; to prepare them for the unscriptural and dangerous rite of confirmation: and still would there rest on you, that heavy burden from which four thousand clergymen asked the bishops to deliver them, the necessity of uttering the thanksgivings of the burial service—very beautiful when heard over the graves of the departed just—for all the wicked people at whose interment you officiated.

I leave to your judgment and conscience, gentlemen, the inquiry, whether it be possible for you to pass on to clerical life otherwise, than by habitual mental reservation; or, to speak more plainly, the habitual violation of truth, in things pertaining to God. “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”

Since the first edition of this work was printed, a bold attempt has been made by Dr. C. J. Vaughan to relieve

* Sermon on Matt. xxiii. 8, by Rev. T. Toller, in *The Congregational Pulpit* for September, 1855.

† *Fisher*, p. 657.

the difficulties which subscription presents to every ingenuous mind. This is his advice to young men in your circumstances :—

“It is enough to justify your place amongst the ministers of a National church, if you can say from the heart: That of the various Christian communities known to you in this country, this is the one which most commends itself to your judgment and conscience; that it is the Church of your choice, and of your affection; that you are able, with confidence and comfort to minister in its offices, and to teach in its spirit.”

Has Dr. C. J. Vaughan authority to alter the meaning of words, and the laws of England? Is it for *him* to determine what can justify you in entering the Establishment? Has he the right to divest the law of subscription of nine-tenths of its rigour? Judge ye; and beware that you are not moved from your simplicity by the frightful and daring Jesuitism to which alas! he has given the high sanction of his name.

It would be wrong not to notice another incident which has occurred since first this little book saw the light, namely, the trial of Mr. Heath for heresy; which trial has proved—what was obvious enough before—that clergymen have not the word of God for their standard. If they think parts of the Prayer-book, at variance with the Bible, they are bound by law to teach according to the former, and not according to the latter: and, as to the scriptures generally, their liberty of deciding how much is to be believed, and how much rejected, is subject to very feeble limitations. You cannot, after Dr Lushington's judgment, enter our National Ecclesiastical Establishment, without trampling under foot Chillingworth's famous saying, “The Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of “Protestants.”

XI.

CONCLUSION.

Suppose the Establishment annihilated! What then? Every steeple and arch would stand where it does now; there would be perfect freedom to all to use a liturgy, or *the* liturgy, as often as they pleased; there would be no obstacle to the existence of as many deans, prebendaries, and bishops, as the people chose to have; the church missionary and pastoral aid societies, would be perfectly free to perpetuate their existence, and extend their operations; in short, Protestant Episcopalians—the most numerous, and by far the wealthiest body of professing Christians in the land—would have the fullest scope for the advocacy of their own opinions, and the exercise of their chosen modes of worship: the main change effected would be the loss of five millions a year, and their being left to provide, as others do, for their own expenditure for religious purposes. “The loss of five millions a year!! Do you think that a slight change?” says some one. I do: for, after due regard had been paid to all the legal rights of patrons, there would remain—if the capitular leases were wisely dealt with, and the claims of incumbents allowed to die out—about a hundred millions sterling, to be appropriated towards the payment of the national debt. The nobility and gentry would, I must admit, suffer great pecuniary loss; for these revenues have been perverted into a pro-

vision for their younger sons, and other dependents; but the millions of Episcopalians would lose little or nothing. They would gain, in the remission of taxes, a large part of the sum they would have to pay for religious ordinances.

And what would be their additional and positive gain? With Dr. Gordon they would exclaim, "Thank God, we are free men." A parliament composed partly of Jews, would no longer lord it over them; the election of bishops would be free; the appointment of clergymen would be free, and a holy and evangelical ministry the result of that freedom; discipline would become a reality; convocation, instead of being a farce, would be a living power; congregational life, even if the name of congregationalism were abjured, would be brought into activity, as it is among the Methodists; the Prayer-book would be reformed; the thousand ecclesiastical difficulties which incessantly harass the cabinet and the legislature, would disappear; social life would be exempted from its most irritating annoyances; all pretences for spending public money in support of Catholicism and Socinianism, would be removed; the best Episcopalian ministers would assume their legitimate position, and so the order which "is heaven's first law" would be substituted for the violent disorder, which the Erastianism of the establishment has created; and in many of our beautiful villages, the people having it in their power to ensure a pure communion and faithful ministry, would turn their meeting-houses into dwelling-houses, and all repair to the venerable Gothic edifice, to worship God in spirit and truth. When we assail the Establishment, we are accused of attacking religion. We wholly deny the truth of the charge. It is to our misguided opponents, not us, that the great

gain would arise of the alteration we plead for. Out of 12,923 working clergymen, Mr. Noel estimated that more than 10,000 neither knew nor preached the gospel. That the accusation is in substance, if not in degree, true, cannot I fear be disproved. Where then is your zeal for Christ, and your love to your country, if you still persist in propping up a system which brings forth, and from its essential secularity must bring forth, such fruits?

This United Kingdom is not the only place in which the principle of national ecclesiastical establishments has been tested. It has been tried in Portugal, Spain, Italy, France, Austria, Germany, Russia, Belgium, Holland; in Prussia, where in Berlin the capital, out of 500,000 inhabitants, 30,000 at most will be found in places of worship on the Lord's day; in Hamburg, where of a population of 200,000 souls, 6,000 only meet for worship on the first day of the week; in Denmark, where in Copenhagen the capital, out of 150,000 people, there are fewer attendants on public worship than in Cambridge; and in many other countries. There is not one, in which it has not wrought ruinously to the souls of men. Everywhere it has turned religion into an engine of state-craft and priestly aggrandisement. Under every variety of development its leading results have been the same. In all lands, Protestant, Catholic, or Greek, it has buried Christ's gospel, and white-washed the tomb. In Holland and the Protestant cantons of Switzerland, in St. Petersburg and Athens, in Rome and Vienna, everywhere on the continent of Europe, ecclesiastical establishments are the great bulwarks of Satan's empire of darkness. What prevents the free circulation of the Bible there, and the unfettered preaching of the gospel? What, but established churches, as they are called? Episcopalians! You do

not wish to uphold error, and injure mankind, and dishonour Christ. Investigate, I beseech you, for the truth's sake, the principle of governmental ecclesiastical establishments, as tested for ages over the continent of Europe: and I think you can no longer remain satisfied, in giving to that principle the support, even of quiescence. As men alive to that liberation of the human race from ignorance and misery, the very distant prospect of which led the prophets to strike their harps to boldest and most tuneful measures, let me summon you to join in a crusade against that evil system I have laid bare to your view. And in this holy war, you may do very much to accelerate the conquest of truth. For let the principle of governmental ecclesiastical establishments be abandoned in this country, let practical Englishmen give their deliberate verdict against it, and the doom of the system is sealed, its knell is rung; and the day of universal liberty, knowledge, and peace, dawns. "Even so come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen."

Courteous reader! I pray you not to treat this subject lightly. If, as many wise and good men have believed, and do believe, governmental ecclesiastical establishments are among the very greatest of all evils, it is your duty to know that truth, and train up your children in the knowledge of it; and your everlasting interests and theirs, will not be unaffected by the use you make of this appeal. "OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO MAN LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST." * * * "IF ANY MAN'S WORK ABIDE WHICH HE HATH BUILT THEREUPON, HE SHALL RECEIVE A REWARD. IF ANY MAN'S WORK SHALL BE BURNED, HE SHALL SUFFER LOSS."

SUPPLEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IF in the subsequent, as in the former pages, the author employs strong language, let it be remembered that he assails Conformity; and that if his statements should seem to bear hard on Conformists, it is only as Conformists. To many of them as Christians, he looks up with profound respect. Strong in faith, and abundant in good works, they shine as lights in the world; and deeply is it to be regretted, that men so capable of commending to mankind every truth they hold, should trample under foot their Master's declaration, "My kingdom is not of this world."

Since the issue of the first edition of this work the writer has received communications respecting it from different parts of Great Britain. He has been credibly informed of Episcopalians reading it, and honestly confessing it to be unanswerable. He has heard of others who have haughtily thrown it aside, as though its argument were not deserving of serious consideration. To the latter class he again appeals, believing that there is no subject which they are called upon by the Lord and Judge of all to study with greater care, than that he has ventured to bring before them; and no act of obedience by which they could more signally honour Him who gave Himself for them, than by the practical abandonment of the theory of ecclesiastical establishments. Such

a change on their part would involve them in reproach, and possibly entail upon them many other painful consequences; but sacrifices for Christ's sake are no novelty: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Paul once gloried in Pharisaism, and thought it gain. He afterwards thought it loss. A change of opinion as entire on the question before us is, in the writer's opinion, the obvious duty of Episcopalians; and, from devout Episcopalians, to be expected: and, at least, he is bold to remind them that the subject is one demanding the most searching scrutiny. It will be no comfort to them hereafter to know, that they have given the weight of their sanction to a system which is anti-scriptural and mischievous, merely because they would not examine it with "a good and honest heart."

Some Nonconformists have spoken of the Establishment as a bundle of sticks, which are to be broken one by one. They use a false metaphor: and so far as they are guided by it, are the dupes of their own imagination. The Establishment is not a cipher, nor a bundle of sticks; but a thing of life, and great potency. It is either a very good thing, or a very bad thing: powerful certainly; if not for great good, then for great evil. It were not perhaps extravagant to say, that if it be not the best institution in the land, it is the worst. The writer believes that it operates ruinously; and that one of its most deplorable effects is seen in the fetters it throws around its votaries, thus depriving this country and the world of the prodigiously increased influence for good which holy Episcopalians would exert, if they possessed religious freedom: "Civil and religious liberty" has been the rallying cry of millions; and all Englishmen admit in

words the superlative value of such liberty; yet, while the Establishment exists, this vaunted acquisition can never be ours. In the House of Commons, on the 4th of July last, Mr. Hubbard moved the order of the day for the second reading of a "Church-Rate law amendment Bill," and said that "*as far as was compatible with the maintenance of a national church*, perfect civil and religious liberty should be enjoyed by all." The implication of Mr. Hubbard, expressed in the words which I have put in italics, namely, that the Establishment and perfect liberty cannot coexist, is true: for Nonconformists find their civil rights grievously impaired; and Conformists—who are immeasurably the greater sufferers—are robbed of their religious rights and privileges. Liberty and Ecclesiastical Establishments are related to each other, as darkness and light are. Just so far as the one prevails, the other disappears.

Mental connivance in error is sin. When truth, and especially truth on the most momentous subject, is brought before us, we owe it to God, to our families, and mankind, to beware of dismissing it lightly because it clashes with our convenience, reputation, or profit, and to weigh it carefully. The great fault of Episcopalians lies in pertinaciously confounding the Establishment with religion. Yet, if the former were destroyed, what would Englishmen lose? Not the Bible, not one of all the churches of the Saints, not the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, not the gift of the Holy Spirit, not access to the mercy-seat, not the practice of assembling themselves together for public worship, not the marvellous heritage which many of them possess as being "heirs of God," not the means of grace and the hope of glory. No fraction of their religious creed, no part of their Christian practice,

no single religious privilege is in danger. What then is it they would lose by the change advocated in this pamphlet? Two things: THE BONDS AND THE BRIBE OF THE STATE. Earnestly are they entreated as honest men to enquire diligently, whether there be any thing that would be taken from them by the annihilation of the Establishment, excepting *the bonds and the bribe of the state*. And if the result of their inquiry be to convince them that the author has rightly defined the question at issue, let them beware hereafter of attempting to persuade their neighbours that any thing religious is in jeopardy.

The town in which this is written may be an apology for exhibiting the subject in another shape:

The Ecclesiastical Establishment = the bonds and bribe of the State,

i.e. The Ecclesiastical Establishment = Burn's Ecclesiastical Law + 5 millions a year.

The last edition of Dr. Burn's famous work extends to four thick volumes, comprising about three thousand five hundred pages. It contains articles relating to a few Christian ordinances. Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for example, are explained, not however scripturally or devotionally, but legally and superstitiously. The subjects are arranged alphabetically, and the titles under the first two letters will suffice as an illustration of the character of the Episcopalian Talmud; for ecclesiastical law is to the Establishment, what the Talmud is to Judaism; tradition, by which the word of God is made void. The author does not pretend to have read the Jewish Talmud, but believes he is correct in saying, that it differs from the Anglican Talmud, in that the latter is immeasurably the more jejune of the two.

Under letter A are 38 subjects, covering 145 pages;
under letter B 23 subjects, covering 234 pages.

Abbot.	Baptism.
Abeyance.	Bastards. 25 pages.
Abjuration.	Beadle.
Accession day.	Bells.
Acolyth.	Benedictines.
Administration.	Benefice. 82 pages.
Admission.	Benefit of Clergy.
Adultery.	Bible.
Advocate.	Bier.
Advowson. 52 pages.	Bigamy.
Agnus Dei.	Bishops. 63 pages.
Alienation of Glebe Lands.	Blasphemy.
Alimony.	Bona Notabilia.
Alms chest.	Bond of Resignation.
Altarage.	Books belonging to the Church.
Anabaptists.	Books " " Parochial
Anabata.	Libraries.
Annals.	Boscage.
Anniversaries.	Boundaries.
Answer.	Brawling.
Antiphonar.	Briefs.
Apparitor.	Bruera.
Appeal. 15 pages.	Bull.
Appraisement.	Burial.
Appropriation. 31 pages.	
Aquæ Bajalus.	
Archbishops.	
Archdeacon.	
Arches.	
Archipresbyter.	
Arrest in the Church.	
Articles.	
Assessment.	
Assests.	
Assise.	
Audience.	
Augmentation.	
Avoidance.	

That is a specimen of the Establishment. What Dissenters desire is, that the bondage of which these 3,500 pages are the index and the means should cease, becoming matter of history only; that the Anglican Talmud should no longer encumber the British Constitution, and corrupt the churches of God. The brightest sign among the Jews is, the disposition on the part of some of them to abide by their sacred writings, and renounce the authority of tradition. Our brightest hope for Episcopalians is, that they will recognize the authority of the Bible alone, and give Burn's ecclesiastical law to the moles and the bats, between which creatures and it there is an obvious affinity. How strange that men "spiritually minded" can endure the admixture of this mass of earthliness with the heavenly revelations, the pure morals, and the rites few and simple of the New Covenant! Were Paul now on earth, he would probably upbraid them with greater severity than he did the Galatians for similar corruption, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?"

One part of the law by which all members of the Establishment are tied and bound, deserves distinct notice:—

"All hope of union was blasted by that second most disastrous, most tyrannical and schismatical act of Uniformity, the authors of which, it is plain, were not seeking unity, but division."

Whose testimony is this? Archdeacon Hare's. What law does he thus denounce? The last Act of Uniformity; which, confirming the previous Acts, is not some trivial part of the system to which it belongs, not a diseased member which may be cut off leaving the body whole and sound, but is as important in relation to the Establish-

ment, as Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights to our civil Constitution. It is the great, fundamental, and all-pervading law of the Establishment; most tyrannical, because of the chains in which it binds Episcopalians; most schismatical, because it separates them from "the communion of saints," and so prevents that union of His servants which our Saviour has taught us is essential to the faith of the world. Most confidently the author asks his intelligent readers, whether if that Magna Charta of the Establishment be "most tyrannical and schismatical," it must not be sinful to uphold, or in any way sanction it.

The laws of our national ecclesiastical system compel all clergymen to believe—no, that is impossible; but compel them very solemnly to say they believe—there is nothing in the Prayer-Book contrary to the word of God: bind them by the most stringent obligations to the use of the same forms continually for baptism, burial, &c., and so shut up the submissive people to ceremonies which myriads of them disbelieve: hand over the care of souls in a parish to any ordained man the patron chooses to appoint, without the slightest regard to the opinions and wishes of the helpless parishioners: authorize the sale for money, of the right to appoint clergymen: entrust the choice of bishops to the chief politician in the land: put several hundreds of livings into the hands of the Lord Chancellor: throw open the doors of membership to men without sanctity: and, according to a Review in the *Christian Observer* for June of that volume of *Essays* recently issued from Oxford, throw open the doors of ministerial position to men without Protestantism on the one hand, and men without faith on the other.* Men

* "Tract xc was meant to establish the principle that a man might retain the orders and benefices of the church *without believing the*

and brethren! you have very exact laws, but they are powerful only to despoil and cripple, not to defend you. You call yourselves a "holy church:" you are, a worldly corporation. The "fine linen clean and white," you have exchanged for the tattered and dingy habiliments of a law-court. In pretence you are orthodox, and exactly of one mind: in fact, you are of all creeds, which is nearly equivalent to being of no creed. Ye tithe mint, anise, and cummin; but neglect the weightier matters: ye strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

If money could compensate for the loss of religious liberty, it must be admitted that the compensation is liberal. Five millions a year is a prodigious price. But how is it expended? A very large part of it is as truly wasted as was much of the money lavished on the Crimean war. It is spent in providing livings for men, whose places would otherwise be filled by capable and worthy occupants. All Episcopalians would like to be free; and many of them are vigorously feeling after freedom; but they want to keep the gold. They have no love for Burn's *Ecclesiastical law*, no reverence for the Act of Uniformity; but great respect for the five millions a year.

The time however has come, when they *must* reconsider their position. Change is inevitable. The Tractarians, as may be seen from Tract 86, pp. 73, 81, have long groaned heavily beneath the yoke imposed on them. Mr. Maurice, writing in *Macmillan's Magazine* for April, coolly expresses his wish for the repeal of the Act of Uniformity, as though the state were likely to let go its share of the bargain. And the evangelical clergy are

"*Articles*: the present volume is meant to establish the principle that a man may retain the orders and benefices of the church *without believing the Bible.*"

writhing in torture, and exposing themselves to the pity and reproach of all classes of thinking men,* by their abortive efforts to reconcile their harassed consciences to the language and practices of the prayer-book; both of which it is notorious they would alter to-morrow, if they dared. Parties thus heterogeneous may coalesce—at least not quarrel—while all are stagnant; but combined action is impossible. Whatever stimulates them to activity—and in this age they are and must be active—necessarily hastens their disruption. Episcopalians see very clearly that their position must be modified. *Now* therefore is the time for them to consider the ecclesiastical question in its length and breadth. To limit their investigations

* Referring to the Scotch clergy, Chalmers says, "If the evangelical clergy had but a tenth part of their pluck and hardihood, they would either clear their establishment of its Puseyism, or scatter so corrupt a hierarchy to the winds." See his correspondence by Hauna, p. 242.

"What conscience can men be supposed to have, who for years have ministered in, and received emolument from, a church, whose doctrines they hold not, and endeavour to disprove? Where is the tender conscience, I would ask, of men, who at their ordination swore to minister according to the church's ritual, and yet by mutilations and omissions change the character and meaning of the very forms by which they profess to minister? Where is the tender conscience of that man, who can, if not mutilate the office by which he administers the sacrament of baptism, yet mumble over words which he does not believe, and thereby come before God with a lie in his right hand, and hypocrisy in his heart? What can we think of the conscience of him, who by receiving the words in an *hypothetical sense*, can dare to kneel down and return God thanks for a benefit, of which in the case before him he either disbelieves or doubts the conveyance? What can such conduct be characterized as, except it be as solemn and profane mockery of God?" See a *Chronological Catena of ancient Fathers, &c., on the doctrine of spiritual regeneration in holy baptism.* p. 3.

"Calling in the name of truth and morality for a more honest consideration of this matter, he (Fisher) shatters to pieces the shallow 'sophistical expedients to which the Evangelical Clergy are driven to have recourse.'"—*Edinburgh Review*, January 1861, p. 13.

to a few petty points of rubrical observance were childish, if practicable. Loudly does the voice of the times summon them to far higher thoughts than these. Chalmers and his allies have shewn how Christians can vindicate their religious freedom. And the evangelical clergy of England would probably have done the same long ago, if the gold had been as light as in Scotland. Let every allowance be made for their trying position. At the same time let them remember that their character is at stake, and cannot much longer bear the severe strain to which it has long been exposed.

Nor is it only one section of the clergy that is called to bold inquiry, and noble deeds. Two hundred years ago, two thousand clergymen and their flocks encountered poverty and imprisonment, rather than sin by submitting to the Act of Uniformity. In our degenerate days, the utmost stretch of manliness extends to denouncing the Act as "most tyrannical and schismatical," and then very quietly wearing its yoke, and pocketing the price of slavery. Mr. Maurice and his friends are in no danger of being driven to the woods and caves for shelter in their religious worship, in no danger of bonds and imprisonment. There is a much easier way of deliverance for them than that trodden by their illustrious predecessors, the nonconforming clergy; and a much shorter way than by the repeal of the Act, the hope of which repeal reminds us of the proverb, "when the sky falls we shall catch larks." The door of liberty, thanks to Nonconformist fidelity and suffering, was thrust backward on its rusty and creaking hinges, and now stands wide open to Mr. Maurice and all others. "Buy the truth and sell it not." "Quit you like men." But, it is not allowed to carry the gold through that door. That is the only restriction.

"Love not the world, neither the things of the world.
"If any man love the world, the love of the Father is
"not in him."

In conclusion the author turns a wistful eye to Non-conformists. A few weeks since he passed two or three hours in the House of Commons. He was struck by the readiness of the House to listen to any man who had anything to say and knew how to say it; and with fervent desire did he anticipate the day, when, after the presentation of a cloud of petitions bearing on the subject, some godly and competent man, some man of faith who knows that with truth on his side "one shall chase a thousand," some hearty successor of the Puritans should rise on the floor of the House and move for a Committee to enquire whether our Ecclesiastical Establishment be not of necessity injurious, socially, politically, and religiously. A noble calling is before him who, well adapting his argument both to his audience and the majesty of his theme, shall exact from the House of Commons reverential regard to the testimony of the King of Kings, "my kingdom is not of this world." Sixteen years have elapsed since the Anti-State-Church Society was formed, and yet no one has been found to make that truth felt in the House of Commons, and through discussions there, understood and respected throughout Europe. The might of Nonconformity is in its great religious principle, taking our stand on which we are stronger than adamant. In details and tactics—though they must not be neglected—we fight at disadvantage, are liable to be tripped up at every step, and it is hard to say whether success or failure be most perplexing.

How mournful is it to note the want of correct ecclesiastical opinions in Germany, and France, and Italy, and

over the continent at large. How much more of light would there have been in the minds of the leading men of Europe than there is, if fifteen or ten years ago we had lifted up our voice like a trumpet! English Dissenters have it fully in their power, through the House of Commons, to make any proclamation they please to the nation and the world: and the world is in an attitude of attention. At present we are almost quiescent and dumb; for the great body of Evangelical Nonconformists stand aloof from the "Liberation Society." Oh! for the man for the times, the man who can command the confidence, and evoke the activity, of the Puritans of the nineteenth century.

TO WESLEYANS.

Does a Church in the New Testament always mean a single congregation? We believe it does. What instance or ground is there in the New Testament for a National Church? We know of none at all. We apprehend it to be a merely political institution. —JOHN WESLEY.

Christian Brethren,

No one who, finding pleasure in quitting occasionally the beaten pathways of Society, has wandered in the sequestered parts of England, and some of its outlying islands—the island of Sark for example—and found here and there, in a humble sleeping apartment, a Bible and Wesley's hymns, and seen indisputable evidence that the people who possessed the books, loved and practised the truths they contain, can fail to admire the zeal of Wesley and his disciples; zeal, which has made its mighty and hallowing power felt amid the teeming population of our large towns, and has carried light and life into the little villages and hamlets and lone houses of these islands of the sea. Suffer one who admires greatly your illustrious founder, and your own faith unfeigned and abundant labours, to add, in the words of scripture, "this also we wish, even your perfection."

The truths propounded by Mr. Wesley, and quoted above, deserve much more serious attention from his followers, than they receive. We hear much among you about your classes, your societies, your districts, and circuits; much about Wesleyanism and Methodism; very

much about *the Connexion*, but scarcely anything about *the Churches of Christ*. That mode of speech which, as Mr. Wesley's words remind you, pervades the New Testament, you have almost abandoned.

It is an instructive fact that centralization in ecclesiastical arrangements, always has the same effect. Scriptural language can scarcely be retained, where scriptural usages disappear. Catholics never do, what the New Testament always does, that is, call a single congregation a Church. "The Greek Church," "the Church of Scotland," "the Free Church of Scotland," "the United Presbyterian Church," are other examples in point: and English Episcopalians speak of the *Church*, not the *Churches* of England. This, you may say, is a question of names. If it be, *Methodists* surely cannot be ignorant of the great power, for good or evil, which may lurk in a name: nor can it be conceived that their great love for the bible, should permit them to treat lightly the abandonment of Scriptural phraseology.

Church—*ἐκκλησία*—means an assembly. If the name be given to a multitude of assemblies united under one government, confusion is introduced. Church—*ἐκκλησία*—is a divine and sacred name, and if it be given to "a merely political institution," to confusion there is added corruption. The word becomes a symbol and fountain of error and mischief. That men should call evil good, was a very dark sign of the times; and it is a bad sign of our time that men persist in calling "a merely political institution," a church.

A merely Political Institution! Suffer me to shew you how exactly true is Mr. Wesley's definition. On the 18th of May, 1843, a great number of Scotch ministers separated themselves from the establishment. What was

it that pertained to them on the 17th, and not on the 19th? On the former day they were in the pay of the government, and subject to its control in things spiritual. On the latter, they had resigned state pay, and were free to manage their own spiritual affairs. They had not separated themselves from anything religious, but from "a merely political institution," which consisted in two things, namely, money received from the state, and subjection in things religious to the state.

When Scotchmen were struggling for "the crown rights of our Lord Jesus Christ," they had the hearty sympathy and co-operation of Wesleyans. The *Watchman* went so far as to say—and my pulse throbbed joyfully as I read it—that if the Scotch evangelicals were turned out, Wesleyans could no longer give their support to the principle of establishments. They *were* turned out. Now the Presbyterian establishment was notoriously pure, in comparison with the Episcopal. The evil of patronage which Chalmers could not tolerate, exists in ten-fold virulence here. Can it be right in Wesleyans to be silent about it? Is such *their* zeal for "the crown rights of our Lord Jesus Christ"? Is it possible that they should longer connive at an ecclesiastical system, in which conversion is not the rule of membership, nor the new birth a pre-requisite to ministerial position, nor clerical subscription any proof of clerical belief, nor the bible the standard of faith?* Brethren, "these things ought not "so to be."

Many of you, probably, have hitherto abstained from

* "The articles cannot stand without the Bible, and to remove that basis is to leave them in the air. * * Dr. Lushington * * allows the whole Bible to be interpreted according to the fancies, the preferences, or the antipathies of the Ideologists; this is, in effect, to undermine the Articles also."—*Watchman*, July 2nd, 1862.

taking an active part in the controversy from a very estimable motive, a love of peace. But remember, that the "merely political institution" is national, and therefore yours. Neutrality is impossible. If you do not oppose, you help to perpetuate it. The bishop of London does not think you neutral; for, judging of you perhaps by the conduct of some of your ministers, he has publicly avowed his hope of seeing you return to the establishment. I know he is wrong; for Wesleyans will never permit their Conference, and pulpits, and classes, to be placed under the control of statesmen. But observe how you are misunderstood! The bishop evidently judges of you by that ancient rule, "He that is not against us, is on our part." If you, in your literary organs, and at the polling booth, had spoken out against the huge evils of the Southern Establishment, as you did against the comparatively slender evil of the Northern Establishment, the hour would have been nearer than it is, for giving religious freedom to Episcopalians, and perfecting the civil liberties of your Nonconformist brethren. I know that, as it is far easier for us than for the Americans to grapple with slavery, so it was an easy task for you to speak valiantly against "intrusion" in Scotland, but would require much courage and self-denial to bear the same testimony against intrusion a hundred-fold more noxious in England. Rely upon it, however, that neutrality, on such a subject, never reasonable or guiltless, is fast becoming impracticable. The question of national ecclesiastical establishments, is attracting the attention of all intelligent men. If you aid not, help will arise elsewhere. Your indecision may defer the final settlement a few years, though that is doubtful. But permit the expression of the earnest hope that Wesleyans will hesitate no longer, to give the full weight

of their influence against a system, the hollowness and worldliness of which are becoming more manifest with every passing year.* Happy for the social, the political, and above all the religious interests of our country will be the day when the government shall limit itself to its own duties, and no longer pretend to the work, for which you must know it is incompetent,—the control of “the Churches of Christ.” I will not yet despair of a vote of Conference in favour of petitions to the Legislature, on behalf of “the crown rights of our Lord Jesus Christ” in England. Dissenters here are maintaining the very same principle as did the Non-intrusionists of Scotland. You admired it there. It cannot be right or politic in you, to oppose, or look coldly on it, here. Hitherto you may have been misled by the phrase “political Dissenters.” If so, the events of the Bicentenary year must have undeceived you; and shewn that the time has fully come for either joining your natural allies, the evangelical Dissenters; or, following the beckoning hand of the Lord Bishop of London. If “intrusion” be right, advocate it boldly, and confess your error in opposing it in the

* The question is really not one of religion, but of morality and public policy. It is not whether such and such things ought to be believed, but whether persons who have made public profession of believing them, and by that means obtained certain advantages, are to be allowed to retain those advantages, while making equally public profession that they do not believe. * * They cannot appeal to general principles of liberty, while they claim to remain members of an exclusive Church.—*Times* of June 27, 1862, on Dr. Lushington’s decision about Wilson and Williams.

“While to deny the Scriptures to be the Word of God will subject “an English Clergyman to deprivation, he may with perfect safety “inform the court that believing it to be the Word of God, he further “teaches that almost every fact stated in it is a myth, and every doctrine “literally untrue, and only ideologically defensible.”—*Quarterly Review* on Dr. Lushington’s decision, Vol. 112, p. 495.

North. But if "non-intrusion" be a sacred religious principle, stand by it in England where it is trampled in the dust, as you did in Scotland where it suffered less dishonour. "How long halt ye between two opinions?"

THE END.



